

THEODORE ROOSEVELT ISLAND
(Analostan Island)
(Mason's Island)
George Washington Memorial Parkway
Potomac River
Washington
District of Columbia

HALS DC-12
DC-12

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY

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(Analostan Island, Mason's Island)

HALS No. DC- 12

Location: Potomac River, Washington, District of Columbia. Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) Coordinates (NAD 27):

	Zone	Easting	Northing
Northwest corner:	18	320757	4307456
Northeast corner:	18	321247	4307385
Southeast corner:	18	321391	4306384
Southwest corner:	18	321125	4306501

Theodore Roosevelt Island is located in the Potomac River within the geographic boundaries of the District of Columbia, between the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the city of Rosslyn, Virginia. The channel between the island and the Virginia shore is commonly referred to as the Little River, and the smaller island located immediately southwest of Theodore Roosevelt Island is known as Little Island. Together the two islands comprise an 88.5-acre naturalistic landscape unique among the heavily urbanized environs. Although distinct, Little Island is managed as a component of the larger Theodore Roosevelt Island. In turn, Theodore Roosevelt Island falls under the auspices of the George Washington Memorial Parkway, a component of the National Park Service. The parkway runs parallel with the island along the Virginia shoreline to the west, and a pedestrian bridge facilitates access to the island across the Potomac River. Visitor parking is provided in a parking lot accessible from the northbound lanes of the George Washington Memorial Parkway. Motorists are required to park their vehicles and enter the island via the footbridge. Pedestrians may also access the footbridge by the 18.5-mile Mount Vernon Trail, which runs between Theodore Roosevelt Island and George Washington's Mount Vernon estate in Alexandria, Virginia. The Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Bridge, a section of U.S. Interstate 66, crosses the island near its southern terminus.

Present Owner.

Occupant, and Use: Theodore Roosevelt Island exists as a wooded haven amidst the dense development of Washington, D.C., to the east and northern Virginia to the west. Several major commuter routes, including the parkway, Interstate 66, VA Route 110, and DC/VA Route 50, also surround the island. Airplanes descend overhead to Ronald Reagan National Airport in Alexandria, Virginia, oftentimes one every two minutes. Despite these modern distractions, and in large part directly because of them, Theodore

Roosevelt Island was conceived of as a national memorial to the conservationist president, to be maintained “as a natural park for the recreation and enjoyment of the public.”¹ Once inside the wooded interior of the island, the visitor can easily imagine himself far removed from the frenetic pace and imposing character of the capital city, at least for a time.

Theodore Roosevelt Island is dominated by a raised plateau spanning its western and central sections. For ease of discussion and because of historical precedent, this plateau is divided into north and south zones, with the boundary defined as an imaginary line extending east from the southernmost terminus of the pedestrian bridge. A marsh and swamp covers the island’s eastern section, and has grown considerably over time. Together with Little Island, the north plateau, south plateau, and marsh (including the swamp) form the four principle landscape areas comprising Theodore Roosevelt Island. All additional landscape elements are defined and fixed on the ground in relation to these areas (Figure 1).

As part of the George Washington Memorial Parkway, Theodore Roosevelt Island is managed by the National Park Service for the enjoyment of the American people. The island is only accessible during daylight hours, and the footbridge is closed at dusk. With the exception of service vehicles, automobiles are not allowed on the island, bicycle riding is likewise prohibited, and dogs must be leashed. Although the entire site is maintained as a living monument to Theodore Roosevelt, the architectural Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, located in the island’s northwest section, specifically recalls the president’s immense character. At the center of architect Eric Gugler’s open-air plaza, a 19’-10” tall bronze statue sculpted by Paul Manship captures a young Roosevelt, arm raised, during one of his many fiery orations. Four immense granite monoliths provide a backdrop for the statue, each one inscribed with his telling quotations on “Nature,” “Manhood,” “Youth,” and “The State.”²

Although the largest memorial in Washington, D.C., Theodore Roosevelt Island’s visitation is significantly lower than most NPS sites in the National Capital Region. The island’s relative remoteness, distance from Washington, D.C., Metro subway stations, and inaccessibility to automobiles greatly contributes to this lowered visitation rate. Those who do seek out the island often do so with picnic baskets in hand or to hike and jog the site’s nearly two miles of trails. In one way or another, all come to the island out of an appreciation for nature, a fitting tribute to the twenty-sixth president of the United States.

¹ U.S. Congress., *An Act to Establish a Memorial to Theodore Roosevelt in the National Capital*, Public –no. 146, 72nd Congress, 21 May 1932.

² See sheet 8 for full citations on monoliths.

Significance:

Theodore Roosevelt Island is significant as a national memorial to Theodore Roosevelt and his devotion to the conservation of America's natural resources. However, the site also enjoys a rich history with several additional periods of significance. Throughout its evolution, topography and geology have always mandated settlement patterns on and the development of the island landscape.

Archeological evidence shows that the island was in use by Native American tribes from prehistory until the early eighteenth century. Furthermore, the island's alternate name of Analostan likely originated through an association with the Necostin (Anacostian) Indians. In 1717, Revolutionary Patriot George Mason IV, author of the Virginia Bill of Rights, acquired the island and established a ferry there in 1748. His son, John Mason, developed the island as a plantation estate and built a causeway connecting with the Virginia coast and a large Classical Revival-style mansion, also named Analostan. The alternate historical name of Mason's Island stems from the Mason family's ownership of the site.³ Later, during the Civil War, Union forces occupied Theodore Roosevelt Island, and in the summer of 1863 it quartered the 1st United States Colored Troops, an African American regiment composed of free blacks and escaped slaves. From May 1864 to June 1865, a freedmen's refugee camp occupied much of the island, including the Mason mansion.

Following a long period of transient ownership, short-term tenancy, and disuse, the Roosevelt Memorial Association (RMA) purchased the island in 1931 as a national memorial to the former president. The following year the RMA gave the island to the federal government, but maintained planting and development rights. From 1932-47 the RMA retained renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. to replant the island as a planned wilderness "to be preserved as nearly as possible as in its natural state."⁴ This concept of designed nature is significant in that it forces people to rethink the human relationship with the natural world, and indeed, what constitutes nature. Less abstractly, the planting plan, carried out by Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) workers, "represents one of the most complete expressions of Olmsted's ideals on scenic preservation, through his attempt to recreate the island's presumed former appearance so that it could continue its natural evolution to a stable, 'climax' forest."⁵

³ The island continued to be commonly referred to as both Analostan and Mason's Island throughout the nineteenth century and into the first three decades of the twentieth century. Throughout this report, "Analostan," "Mason's Island," and "Theodore Roosevelt Island" denote the same property. Generally, when one of the three titles appears in the historical record, that title is repeated in this report.

⁴ "Roosevelt Park Bill Is Approved," newspaper clipping from file "Theodore Roosevelt Island, 1900-1949," District of Columbia Public Library, Martin Luther King, Jr., Branch, Washingtoniana Collection.

⁵ Kay Fanning, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Theodore Roosevelt Island," (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, 1999), 30.

Finally, Gugler's plaza and Manship's *Theodore Roosevelt* sculpture represent a distinct step in the development of presidential memorials within Washington, D.C.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Dates of Establishment

a. Prehistory and Early History to 1717

From prehistory until the eighteenth century, several Algonquin-speaking Native American tribes inhabited the Potomac River valley. Fishing and farming villages dotted the river from below Great Falls to its terminus in Chesapeake Bay.⁶ In 1711, Swiss explorer Baron Christoph von Graffenried traveled through the Potomac valley during an unsuccessful attempt to settle a group of Swiss and German immigrants in North Carolina. Regarding the future Theodore Roosevelt Island, he recorded that it was "all cut out of rock. Above it is a very fine and good soil, sufficient to support a whole family. Indians live there. One could make an impregnable fort of it."⁷ Although von Graffenried did not distinguish the island by name, seventeenth and eighteenth century maps identify the island as "Anacostien."⁸ Likewise, "Anacosta Island" had been used as a landmark in meets and bounds descriptions of Virginia deeds and wills since at least 1657.⁹

During his adventures in the Chesapeake Bay region in the 1620s and 1630s, English Captain Henry Fleet referred to the Necostin Indians, although he did not give their location.¹⁰ According to historians Nan and Ross Netherton, the Necostin, or Anacostin,¹¹ people lived on and near the island, and were part of the Powhatan confederacy, a loose alliance which briefly united some thirty eastern Virginia Native American tribes in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth

⁶ Ibid., 2. For additional information on the Native American inhabitants of the Potomac River valley, see Stephen R. Potter, *Commoners, Tribute, and Chiefs: The Development of Algonquin Culture in the Potomac Valley* (Charlottesville, Va.: University Press of Virginia, 1994).

⁷ Christoph Von Graffenried, *Christoph Von Graffenried's Account of the Founding of New Bern*, ed. and trans. Vincent H. Todd and Julius Goebel (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton Printing Co., 1920), 391.

⁸ Augustin Herrmann, *Virginia and Maryland as it is Planted and Inhabited in the Present Year 1670* (London: Aug. Herman [sic] and Thomas Withinbrook, 1673), map, portion reproduced in Netherton, "Delicate Beauty," 10a; John Senex, *A New Map of Virginia, Maryland, and Improved Parts of Pennsylvania & New Jersey* (London: s.n., 1719), map, Library of Congress, *Maryland Maps: Early Works to 1800*, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3790.ct002126> (accessed 20 July 2007).

⁹ Nan Netherton, "Delicate Beauty and Burly Majesty: The Story of Theodore Roosevelt Island," rev. draft (unpublished report, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, March 1980), 10.

¹⁰ James F. Duhamel, "Analostan Island," in *Records of the Columbia Historical Society* 35-36 (1935): 133.

¹¹ Also known as the Anacostien and Anacostan. According to Duhamel, Captain John Smith wrote of the Nacoochtank Indians inhabiting the Potomac River Valley in the seventeenth century. This spelling appears to be a variation of Nacotchtanke, an alternate name for the Necostins.

centuries.¹² The earliest titles given the island are presumably derivatives of the Anacostin name. At the very least, two prehistoric sites excavated on Theodore Roosevelt Island in the summer of 1967 uncovered large quantities of pottery sherds, projectile points, animal bones, and similar artifacts, giving tangible proof of a substantial, and most likely long-lived, Native American presence on the island.¹³

Until 1632 the English Crown claimed sole title to Theodore Roosevelt Island and the surrounding lands. Then, in that year, King Charles I granted Cecilius Calvert, Second Lord Baltimore, a land patent for much of the colony of Maryland.¹⁴ Several seventeenth and eighteenth century records describe the island as “My Lord’s Island,” presumably a designation used by Calvert as a sign of respect for his benefactor.¹⁵ On 21 July 1680, Charles Calvert, Third Lord Baltimore, granted the island to Captain Randolph Brandt of Charles County, Maryland, as payment for protecting colonists from hostile Indians.¹⁶ The grant, certified 29 April 1682, stipulated that Brandt was to receive “one certain parcel of land being an island lying in the Patomack River near the falls of said river . . . known by the name of the Anacostian Ile and containing by estimate 75 acres more or less to be held of Zackiah Manor called Barbadoes.”¹⁷ The relationship with Zackiah Manor, a separate holding created at the mouth of the nearby Wicomico River in 1667, is uncertain, but Brandt, an emigrant from Barbadoes in the West Indies, also referred to the island as Barbadoes.¹⁸ Upon his death in 1698 or 1699, Brandt left the island to his daughter and son-in-law, Margaret and Francis Hammersley,¹⁹ who in turn sold “Annalostian Island” to George Mason III in 1717 for £35 sterling.²⁰ The island came to be known as Analostan, apparently an outgrowth of the earlier Native American derived names.

b. Mason Family Ownership, 1717-1833

From 1717-1833 the prominent Mason family of Virginia owned Theodore Roosevelt Island, and during this period it began to be referred to as Mason’s Island.²¹ When George Mason III died

¹² Nan Netherton and Ross Netherton, *Arlington County in Virginia: A Pictorial History* (Norfolk: The Donning Co., 1987), 14.

¹³ Harvard G. Ayers, “Report of Archeological Testing of the Site of TRI #1 on Theodore Roosevelt Island, with an Addendum, A History of Theodore Roosevelt Island by Edith Moore Sprouse” (unpublished report, Catholic University of America, 1967).

¹⁴ J. Harry Shannon [The Rambler, pseud.], “The Rambler’s Third Article on Early History of Analostan Island,” *Washington Star*, 27 February 1921.

¹⁵ Duhamel, 134.

¹⁶ J. Harry Shannon [The Rambler, pseud.], “The Rambler Writes Second Article on History of Analostan Island,” *Washington Star*, 6 February 1921; Mollie Somerville, “General John Mason of Analostan Island,” *Iron Worker* 26 (spring 1962): 3.

¹⁷ Maryland Patents, vol. 21, p. 363, Maryland Hall of Records, Annapolis, Md., quoted in Netherton, “Delicate Beauty,” 13.

¹⁸ Shannon, “The Rambler Writes Second Article on History of Analostan Island,” Fanning, 33.

¹⁹ Mary E. Curry, “Theodore Roosevelt Island: A Broken Link to Early Washington, D.C. History,” *Records of the Columbia Historical Society* 1971-1972 (1973): 19.

²⁰ Netherton, 14.

²¹ Although the title of Mason’s Island was applied to the site throughout the nineteenth century, Analostan Island persisted as its most common name. Likewise, its legal title remained Analostan Island until 21 May 1932, when Congress officially re-designated it as Roosevelt Island.

unexpectedly in 1735, he left his young son George Mason IV a substantial inheritance, which included the island. He became a wealthy planter and Revolutionary statesman, best remembered as the author of the 1776 Virginia Constitution and Declaration of Rights. As a Virginia delegate to the United States Constitutional Convention in 1787, he led the movement to include a statement of explicit individual rights as part of the United States Constitution. His efforts culminated in the acceptance of the Bill of Rights as the first ten Constitutional Amendments, largely based on the earlier Virginia Declaration of Rights. Neither George Mason settled on the island, but in 1748 the younger established a ferry between Georgetown on the Maryland side of the Potomac and one or more landings on the island's north shore.²² Around this time he also constructed a two-story ferry house on the eastern end of the island's north shore. Mason's Ferry, as it was called, operated until ca. 1867, and functioned as the only river crossing in the area until 1809, when Long Bridge was constructed approximately one mile south of the island. Attached to a thick cable anchored at both ends, small boats carried passengers, wagons, livestock, and crops across the Potomac for over 150 years. Armies also utilized Mason's Ferry, with English General Edward Braddock and his troops moving north in the spring of 1755 during the French and Indian War, and the armies of Rochambeau and Lafayette while traveling to the Revolutionary War Battle of Yorktown in 1781. George Washington used the ferry at least twice, and probably frequently. During a crossing in 1795, a crowd of people lined the road from the ferry landing in Georgetown to the M Street bridge as he passed. When the British marched on and burned the federal buildings in Washington, D.C., during the summer of 1814, President James Madison, members of his cabinet, and other notable citizens fled to Virginia via the ferry. Among them was George Mason IV's son, John Mason.²³

After George Mason IV died in 1792, the island passed to his fourth son, John Mason (1766-1849), who became so closely associated with the property that his contemporaries often referred to him as "John Mason of Analostan Island."²⁴ An aquatint view of Washington issued on 1 September 1795, features a prominent view of the island, covered with trees and with no visible improvements (Figure 2). Although the topography of the scene is romanticized, it most likely captures the general appearance of the island around the time it passed into John Mason's possession.²⁵ Published 1 June 1801, but believed to have been painted shortly before the end of the eighteenth century, a second aquatint with a nearly identical view as the first shows an entirely different scene (Figure 3).²⁶ Much of the central portion of the island's landscape has been cleared, and two small, gable-roofed buildings are clearly visible. While it is not known precisely when these structures were built, they appear to be part of John Mason's late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century conversion of the island into a functional plantation and rural estate. Beginning on 16 January 1793 and continuing for several weeks, he advertised for "12 to 15 stout young Negro Fellows' for a year's employment in 'the neighborhood of my Ferry-House'

²² The ferry was a lucrative venture, earning a profit of \$700 in 1818 alone. See David Bailie Warden, *A Chorographical and Statistical Description of the District of Columbia: The Seat of the General Government of the United States* (Smith: Paris, 1816), 134.

²³ Zack Spratt, "Ferries in the District of Columbia," *Records of the Columbia Historical Society* 53-56 (1959): 183-87.

²⁴ Somerville, 3.

²⁵ Reys, 46.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 64.

opposite Georgetown.”²⁷ These laborers, probably slaves, were presumably engaged in clearing the land, and possibly constructing these buildings as well. By 1802, Mason had built a large Classical Revival-style mansion, also named Analostan, on the southern portion of the island’s central plateau (Figure 4). The two smaller buildings present in the 1801 aquatint appear to have occupied approximately the same location. In 1936, the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) conducted an archeological excavation of the mansion site under the direction of architect Stuart M. Barnette, who fixed the positions of the mansion and four dependent outbuildings (Figure 5). It is possible that the small buildings shown in the 1801 aquatint correspond with two of these outbuildings. Moreover, due to the unusual location of its fireplace and a curious vertical joint, Barnette speculated that the central room in the mansion’s west wing might have once been “part of a small independent house built earlier than the remainder of the building”²⁸ (Figure 6). Therefore, it is also possible that one of the original buildings was later built into the mansion itself. Finally, the original pair of buildings may have been erected as temporary structures needed to house the laborers and supplies while work on the island progressed.²⁹ In this case, one or both would likely have been dismantled and their materials reused during construction of the mansion.

Although the mansion house is known to have existed by 1802, its precise date of construction is unknown. Given the sequence of development described above, it probably dates to ca. 1797-1802. Moreover, at least one of John and Anna Maria Mason’s³⁰ ten children, James Murray Mason, is said to have been born there in 1798, although other accounts give Georgetown as his place of birth.³¹ Regardless, the mansion, described as being of brick or brick and sandstone construction, was a one-story building set atop a raised, rough hewn stone basement and topped by gabled roofs.³² It was designed as a typical H-plan house, with two wings connected by a central, five-bay main block. The H-plan design, particularly a one-story H-plan, was unusual, although not unheard of, in America during this time. In general form and appearance, the design for Analostan is reminiscent of Stratford Hall, although the latter, constructed in 1738, is a more massive structure. However, only Analostan’s main block and west wing were actually built as designed.

The mansion’s Classical Revival features were most clearly demonstrated in the pedimented *Distyle in antis* temple entrance, centered on the front (north) façade of the main block and

²⁷ Advertisements, *Columbian Mirror* and *Alexandria Gazette*, 16, 19, and 23 January 1793; 2, 6, 9, and 16 February 1793, quoted in Willard J. Webb, “John Mason of Analostan Island,” *The Arlington Historical Magazine* 5, no. 4 (October 1976): 24-25.

²⁸ Stuart M. Barnette, “Descriptive Data on the Mason House,” in “General John Mason House, Analostan Island or Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, District of Columbia”(Washington, D.C.: Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) No. DC-28, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, 1936), 21.

²⁹ Mason and his family would not likely have lived in their Georgetown residence during this time, and not on the island.

³⁰ John and his wife Anna Maria Mason were married in July 1796. See Webb, 25.

³¹ James Murray Mason would later achieve notoriety, and infamy, as the Confederate Commissioner to Great Britain and France during the Civil War.

³² Barnette, “Descriptive Data on the Mason House,” 3; Somerville, 4.

flanked by paired six-over-six sash windows.³³ While the main block's windows were rectangular and relatively unadorned, those on the west pavilion were significantly more detailed and characterized by the use of the blind arch form. Here the main floor fenestration consisted of three arched windows, each with sash glazed with nine lights and capped by a fanlight. Formal architectural elements linked these windows together, including continuous imposts, round arches springing above each window, and blind panels inset below. Corresponding windows illuminated the basement level, but with vertically-placed bars taking the place of window glaze (Figure 7).

Although Analostan mansion is often referred to as a summer home, the Mason family did not actually reside there during the hottest months, forced off the island by July due to the humid, "sickly" weather.³⁴ While several sources state that the Masons occupied the island for much of the year, the firsthand account of architect Robert Mill's visit contradicts this claim. According to Mills, the island was "rather unhealthy in the fall months owing to being much surrounded with marsh and low ground which is left by the tide exclusive of the thick fog which in the spring and summer months lies on the river and rises with the sun."³⁵ Writing in 1906, a granddaughter of John Mason recalled that the family spent their winters in Georgetown or Alexandria.³⁶ Most likely, the Masons resided on the island only during the spring and early summer. That John Mason could afford to build such a grand house and only utilize it for a portion of the year demonstrates that he was among the wealthiest men in the region.

Both George Mason IV and his eldest son, George Mason V, owned and operated large plantations in Stafford (now Fairfax) County, Virginia. George Mason IV, however, did not desire that John should also become a planter, and from an early age groomed him for a career in business. John Mason's formal training began with a two-year apprenticeship in the counting house of Alexandria merchant William Hartshorne. Shortly thereafter John established the mercantile firm of Fenwick, Mason & Company in 1788 with James and Joseph Fenwick. The firm transported and sold Maryland and Virginia tobacco to European agents and bought and shipped European goods back to America. In 1788, Mason moved to Bordeaux, France, where the firm's headquarters was to be located. After only three years the business was flourishing, and he returned in 1791. A year later, Mason opened an office of Fenwick, Mason & Company in Georgetown, where he also owned a townhouse.³⁷ In 1793, he became one of the incorporators and directors of the Bank of Columbia, and was appointed president in 1798. Due to falling tobacco prices and persistent war in Europe, Fenwick, Mason & Company dissolved in 1800.

³³ *Distyle in antis* is an architectural term meaning "to have two columns in front." In the case of the Mason mansion, the entrance included two freestanding columns and two flat pilasters.

³⁴ Anne Newport Royall, *The Black Book: Or a Continuation of Travels in the United States*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: printed for the author, 1828), 274.

³⁵ On 11 July 1803, architect Robert Mills visited Mason's Island and offered this account of the conditions there. See Robert Mills, "An Unpublished Diary of Robert Mills, 1803," ed. Cohen Hennig, *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine* 51 (October 1950): 193-94.

³⁶ Virginia Mason, *The Public Life and Diplomatic Correspondence of James M. Mason, with Some Personal History by Virginia Mason (His Daughter)* (New York and Washington, D.C.: Neale Publishing, 1906), 8-9.

³⁷ Mason's Georgetown residence was located at 25th and L streets and fronted Pennsylvania Avenue. See Duhamel, 140.

Mason, however, continued as a successful businessman, operating a fishery and a quarry, and regulating trade with Native American tribes as the Superintendent of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Beginning in 1796, he served thirty years in George Washington's Potomack Canal Company, first as a director and later as president. In these positions Mason directed many improvements designed to make the river more navigable for trade and commerce vessels. Between the years 1800-15 his Georgetown properties, including his townhouse, warehouse, and wharf, were assessed at a value of \$15,000. In June 1802, President Thomas Jefferson appointed him to the rank of brigadier general in the newly created District of Columbia militia. Mason resigned in April 1811, but he continued to use the title of general until his death in 1849. He also remained active in military affairs, purchasing the Columbia Foundry in 1815. The foundry was the sole supplier of government guns from 1800-09 and remained a leading supplier after this time. During his lifetime John Mason counted among his business associates and personal friends many of the most prominent individuals of the time, including Presidents Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Monroe, Secretary of State (later Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court) John Marshall, Secretary of the Navy Benjamin Stoddert, Architect of the Capitol William Thornton, and Louis Philippe, Duc d'Orleans and the last King of France (reigned 1830-48).³⁸

Although John Mason was not, primarily, a planter, he was intensely interested in agriculture and operated his island as a functional, largely self-sufficient plantation. In 1818, city surveyor Robert King published a map of the city of Washington that included a detailed depiction of the island at that time, some twenty years into Mason's development of the landscape.³⁹ The majority of the site was taken up by carefully laid-out fields of neatly planted, ordered rows of crops, roughly divided between the smaller, private grounds south of the house, and the larger, more public grounds to the north.⁴⁰ The kitchen garden, located to the south, consisted of several acres of land planted with "culinary vegetables."⁴¹ In addition to the kitchen outbuildings, slave quarters and workshops were also located south of the house, with at least some reported along "the island's walled eastern shoreline."⁴² Cotton, maize, and possibly other crops were planted in the large area north of the house. Writing in 1816, David Bailie Warden recalled an 1811 visit to Analostan Island, where he was much impressed with the varieties of cotton and maize that Mason grew.⁴³ His detailed account is worth quoting at length:

³⁸ For a thorough examination of the life of John Mason, see Webb, "John Mason of Analostan Island."

³⁹ *A Map of the City of Washington in the District of Columbia, Established as the Permanent Seat of the Government of the United States of America, from Actual Survey as Laid Out on the Ground*, drawn by R[obert] King and Engraved by C[onrad] Schwarz (Washington, D.C.: Rt. King, [1818]), engraving, Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., reproduced in Repts, 67. See sheet 1, box 2 for detail.

⁴⁰ Although it is impossible to know if Robert King's map precisely represents the island's actual landscape, contemporary accounts and the 1936 HABS fieldwork confirm that the map was reasonably accurate. In authoring the HABS report, architect Stuart Barnette concluded that at the very least "the remnants of the planting and topography as they exist today substantiate in principal the layout shown." See Barnette, "Descriptive Data on the Mason House," 8.

⁴¹ Royall, 273.

⁴² Somerville, 4.

⁴³ David Bailie Warden (1772-1845) emigrated from Ireland at a young age, and became a respected voice in the cultural, scientific, and diplomatic circles of the United States. He carried on active correspondence with many of the leaders of these fields, including Thomas Jefferson, Albert Gallatin, Baron Alexander von Humboldt, Joseph

General Mason cultivates, for the use of his family, a species of cotton of the colour of nankeen [yellow or buff], which is spun and woven with facility, and wears well without losing its natural hue. Great pains were taken to prevent its sexual intercourse with other species of cotton, and yet its colour is not uniform. Some pods have a shade of yellow, others are whitish, and must be separated from those of the natural nankeen colour . . . General Mason, not knowing how he obtained this species of cotton, conjectured that the seeds had been brought from China or India. On my voyage to France, on board the Constitution frigate, I was one day perusing a small volume, entitled, "An Epitome of the History of Malta and Gozo," by Charles Wilkinson; in which it is stated, that three types of cotton are there cultivated, and that one, imported from the Antilles, is of a cinnamon colour. Mr. Morris, first lieutenant of the frigate, with whom I happened to converse on this subject, informed me, that he had carried some of the seeds of this species to General Mason, from his brother-in-law then at Naples, and not finding the former at home when he called to deliver the present, he left the seed, without any indication concerning its origin

This author observes, that the seed is sown in April; that the head of the plant is cut in September to let the cotton spread, which is gathered in October; that the plants are left in the ground three or four years, and are staked every spring, like raspberry plants in England; that this method saves the trouble of annual sowing and cultivation; and he adds, that a square piece of fruitful soil, containing four hundred and twenty geometrical yards produces five hundred pounds of cotton.

The soil of General Mason's land, and of neighboring tracts of land, is good for cotton, but the summer is not long enough to bring the plant to maturity; and it is liable to be injured by frost before it is ripe.

General Mason cultivates a species of maize (zea-mays), the leaves of which, of a deep purple colour, are employed as a dye. For this purpose they are gathered before the grain ripens, when they contain the greatest quantity of sap. With mordants of alum and copperas, wool is dyed different shades of purple. The plant is vigorous, and has a great number of grains. I had the honour of presenting some of the seeds to the Empress Josephine,⁴⁴ who sowed them with her own hand in the gardens of Malmaison, where they gave a luxuriant produce.⁴⁵

John Mason may have sold limited quantities of this cotton or maize when not required for domestic use, but when, or in what quantities, is unknown. However, he also raised Spanish Merino sheep as a commercial venture. The British embargo on wool and wool clothing exports to the United States prior to the War of 1812 led to the "Merino Craze," as from 1809-11 the Diplomatic Corps imported approximately 3,500 sheep from Portugal to bolster the primitive

Gay-Lussac, Washington Irving, and Alexander Dallas Bache. For additional information, see David Bailie Warden, *David Bailie Warden Family Papers*, ed. Bayly Ellen Marks (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1970).

⁴⁴ Joséphine de Beauharnais (1763-1814), Empress of the French and first wife of Napoléon Bonaparte.

⁴⁵ Warden, *A Chorographical and Statistical Description*, 141-44.

American woolen industry.⁴⁶ Mason fully embraced this business opportunity by acquiring a herd of his own.⁴⁷ In 1810, he sold thirty ewes, and in 1811 Warden recorded that Mason owned fifteen sheep (five rams and ten ewes) of the Infantado, Paular, Viadillo, and Guadalupe breeds.⁴⁸ His reputation as a successful sheep breeder was greatly bolstered through his involvement in the Columbia Agricultural Society, one of the first such groups organized in the United States. He played an active role in the Society's founding in 1809, functioned as a member of its standing committee in 1810 and 1811, and participated in its semi-annual exhibitions and fairs. In both the 1811 and 1812 competitions his entries in the fine-wooled lamb category earned first-place honors. His wife, Anna, also successfully competed in the fairs, winning three times in 1810 for her entries in the cotton cloth, hempen or flaxen table linen, and cotton or thread stockings categories.⁴⁹ The cotton she used was almost certainly the nankeen variety grown on the island. John Mason also undoubtedly touted the utility of his purple maize as a wool dye during these events.

With the income generated by his ferry and other business ventures, John Mason enjoyed the freedom to dabble in experimental agriculture without any great need for a return on his investments. Although the plantation was functional, and largely self-sufficient, he was not dependent on its products.⁵⁰ The whole of Mason's farming enterprise, including the Merino sheep, essentially amounted to a leisure pursuit, a diversion from his business life in Georgetown. The island served as a setting for this pastime, but also as a rural retreat, a place for the family to relax and entertain guests. In keeping with this second role, John Mason developed a series of pleasure grounds, orchards, gardens, lawns, and ornamental structures so charming that during an 1828 visit Anne Newport Royall lauded the landscape as "the most enchanting spot I ever beheld."⁵¹

Before 1807, travelers typically arrived on the island by way of the ferry, and those wishing to continue on to Virginia were forced to charter private crafts to carry them across the Little River. In that year, however, the Georgetown Common Council authorized a causeway built atop a dam⁵² to be constructed at public expense from the Virginia shore to the island's northwest corner.⁵³ A short road across the northern tip of the island connected the causeway and ferry landing, creating a single, heavily traveled route across the Potomac River. Both Warden and Royall traveled across the causeway to reach the island. As with most visitors, they approached

⁴⁶ C. V. Ross, *Sheep Production and Management* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1989): 26-27.

⁴⁷ The sheep grazed north of the house, possibly in the large, mostly open area shown to the far northwest on the 1818 King map.

⁴⁸ Warden, *A Chorographical and Statistical Description*, 151.

⁴⁹ Curry, 21-22.

⁵⁰ Fanning, 37.

⁵¹ Royall, 273. Anne Newport Royall is often regarded as the first professional woman journalist in the United States. She traveled extensively and briefly visited John Mason and his family on the island. For more information on Royall's life and career, see Cynthia Earman, "An Uncommon Scold: Treasure-Talk Describes Life of Anne Royall," *Library of Congress Information Bulletin* 56, no. 1 (January 2000): <http://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/0001/royall.html> (accessed 7 November 2007).

⁵² Somerville records that the causeway was 380 feet long and authorized by Congress to divert the flow of the Potomac River because soil deposits had accumulated near Georgetown and were ruining river navigation. See Somerville, 5.

⁵³ Duhamel, 142-43.

the mansion from the north, via a formal, tree-lined allee. The orchards were located here, and Warden noted that the “blossoms of the cherry, apple, and peach trees, of the hawthorn and aromatic shrubs, filled the air with their fragrance.”⁵⁴ This long, formal entrance served to separate the Mason family’s private space from the public traffic to the north, and to aggrandize the mansion at the end of the drive. A semicircular line of trees both further dramatized the act of approach and screened the mansion’s north elevation.⁵⁵ The corresponding allee stretching south from the mansion to the island’s southern tip further illustrates the landscape’s linear design.

This arrangement highlighted the island’s role as a cultural landscape, where human relationships both shaped and were shaped by the physical environment. Moreover, in the words of architectural historian Dell Upton, the cultural landscape of Mason’s Island was “articulated” as well as “processional.”⁵⁶ As with the processional design, this articulation began with the placement of the mansion house. John Mason’s residence occupied the most prominent position on the island, a promontory some 50’ above the river’s waterline.⁵⁷ From this point he could look down over his entire estate, while the agricultural workers, servants, and slaves quite literally looked up to him. Welcomed guests proceeded up to the house, and in the process elevated themselves physically and socially to the level of the Masons. Conversely, typical outbuildings were also erected on the island, such as a kitchen, icehouse, barns, workshops, cellars, storerooms, privies, and slave quarters.⁵⁸ Each would have held a lower position on the ground relative to the mansion, and therefore visually reinforced the island’s social hierarchy. Those who lived and worked in these places, or out in the fields, were simply not on par with the Mason family or their guests. An individual’s social status was therefore made abundantly clear through the processes of articulation and procession, and in turn this social position determined his or her placement on the ground, whether looking up from below or down from above.

The orchards, pastureland, and cultivated fields spread out north of the house, while terraced lawns and gardens were arranged to the south. In addition to the substantial kitchen gardens, this private area included a second garden adjacent to the mansion, which Royall noted was “appropriated to flowers, shrubs, grapes, and every rare plant, consisting of the various species of the four quarters of the globe!”⁵⁹ Warden also commented on a garden “ornamented with a variety of trees and shrubs, and, in the midst, there is a lawn covered with a beautiful verdure.”⁶⁰ He then went on to describe a “rural dance” held on the island in July 1811, before the Mason’s eldest son, John, Jr., departed for France. This event was probably typical of the parties the Masons hosted.

⁵⁴ Warden, *A Chorographical and Statistical Description*, 136-37.

⁵⁵ Fanning, 38.

⁵⁶ Dell Upton, “White and Black Landscapes in Eighteenth-Century Virginia,” in *Material Life in America, 1600-1860*, ed. Robert Blair St. George (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988), 363.

⁵⁷ Warden, *A Chorographical and Statistical Description*, 136.

⁵⁸ Several historical and contemporary sources mention the existence of outbuildings, but are extremely vague in their descriptions and locations. The structures listed here are among the most common outbuildings of the period, were present on most estates, and would have been found on the island.

⁵⁹ Royall, 273.

⁶⁰ Warden, *A Chorographical and Statistical Description*, 157.

*The young people danced on the lawn. Tea, coffee cakes, fresh and preserved fruits, were presented to the guests, who sat or walked about conversing, or silently admiring the dance under the shade of trees, illuminated by lamps, which were half obscured by the bright light of the moon. The summer-house is shaded by oak and linden-trees, the coolness and tranquility of which invite to contemplation. The refreshing breezes of the Potomac, and the gentle murmuring of its waters against the rocks, the warbling of birds, and the mournful aspect of weeping-willows, inspire a thousand varied sensations.*⁶¹

John Mason's two eldest daughters were also married on the island, with the ceremonies likely held on the ornamental grounds south of the house. Sarah Maria Mason (1800-90) wed one Sam Cooper here on 4 April 1827, and later that year Virginia Mason (1802-38) married her cousin, George Mason of Greenspring, Virginia, on 23 October.⁶²

Although the Mason mansion is sometimes referred to as a summer-house in order to differentiate it from their Georgetown residence, Warden refers to the mansion as simply "the house" throughout the account of his visit. His use of the term summer-house therefore indicates a separate structure, likely an open-air entertainment area such as a gazebo or pergola. Although he does not give its precise location, he does state that, "A few feet below the summer-house the rocks afford seats, where those who are fond of fishing may indulge in this amusement."⁶³ Given this description, the summer-house was situated somewhere along the island's coast. The southernmost tip is a probable location, as the south tree-lined allee leads from the mansion directly to this point, bisecting the private gardens and incorporating a circular parterre along the way.⁶⁴

Although John Mason extensively developed the island as a plantation estate and picturesque retreat, he also retained portions of its former natural landscape. A large crescent-shaped marshy swamp dominated the northeast coast, stretching inland and as far south as the tree line immediately north of the mansion. Cultivation was clearly impossible here; plantation fields ended abruptly all along the irregular edge. Mason also maintained a forested edge around the island's perimeter, including the interior edge of the swamp. These trees, remnants of the native woodland, provided a means of concealing the estate from ferry traffic and ships on the Potomac. This screen was only broken immediately east of the mansion, to afford a view across the river to Washington. As Royall observed:

*The margin of the island is fringed with natural growth, and forms innumerable grotesque coppices, of subtle, whimsical figures, some entwined with the wild grape, form beautiful bowers and recesses, on the very brink of the river. Those natural bowers completely shut out the rays of the sun.*⁶⁵

⁶¹ Ibid., 157-158.

⁶² *National Intelligencer*, 9 April and 30 October 1827.

⁶³ Warden, *A Chorographical and Statistical Description*, 158.

⁶⁴ Barnette, "Descriptive Data on the Mason House," 8.

⁶⁵ Royall, 273.

Likewise, Warden gave an extensive list of the plants and animals he saw on the island during his visit. In most cases he does not give specific locations, but it is clear that he is not describing the gardens, orchards, or plantation fields. The following list summarizes the native vegetation believed to be present on the island in 1811.⁶⁶

- Different species of oak (*Quercus*), walnut (*Juglans*), mulberry (*Morus*), poplar (*Populus*), locust (*Gleditsia* and *Robinia*), ash (*Fraxinus*), willow (*Salix*), the papaw (*Anona triloba*) and spindle tree (*Orchidocarpum triloba*) “owing to the seeds brought by stream from mountainous regions.”
- White oak (*Quercus alba*), with one notable specimen near the summer-house attaining a one-foot trunk diameter.
- “A species of eglantine” thirty feet in length and three inches in diameter supported by a tree near the causeway.⁶⁷
- Poison oak (*Rhus toxicodendron*), Virginia jessamine (*Rhus vernix*), several species of milkweeds (*Asclepias*), redbud (*Cercis Canadensis*), and sassafras tree (*Laurus sassafras*) were located at various points around the island.

Warden also devoted several pages to describing the wild animals he encountered on the island: terrapin (*Testudo concentrica*), snapping turtle (*Testudo ferox*), painted tortoise (*Emys picta*), streaked tortoise (*Emys virgulata*), muskrat (*Castor zibethicus*), cat-bird (*Muscicapa vertice nigro*), partridge (Phasianidae), humming bird (*Trochilus colubris*), crow (*Gracula quiscula*), and several other birds. He also noted that deer (*Cervus*), wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*), canvas-back duck (*Anas ferna*), and wild (Canada) goose (*Anser Canadensis*), while prevalent fifty years early, had since disappeared. Mason’s development of the island no doubt caused this extirpation.⁶⁸

John Mason’s wealth allowed him and his family to hold this lofty place in society. However, beginning in 1815 he endured a series of poor investments and business ventures. He mortgaged the island to the Branch Bank of the United States on 31 December 1825, executing a deed of trust to secure notes in the sum of \$28,560, and gave another trust on the island in 1829.⁶⁹ Unable to pay back his debts, the bank foreclosed on the island and 1,800 acres of Mason’s land in northern Virginia, although it became polite convention among local residents to attribute his departure to the terrible mosquitoes present on the island during the summer months.⁷⁰ This apocryphal story has been passed down and appears in several accounts of Theodore Roosevelt

⁶⁶ Warden, *A Chorographical and Statistical Description*, 139-41.

⁶⁷ This reference is unclear. Warden may be describing sweetbriar (*Rosa eglanteria*), but this member of the rose family typically only grows to six feet in height. See Liberty Hyde Bailey and Ethyl Hyde Bailey, “*Rosa eglanteria*,” in *Hortus Third: A Concise Dictionary of Plants Cultivated in the United States and Canada*, revised and expanded by the staff of the Liberty Hyde Bailey Hortorium, Cornell University (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1976), 975.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 144-50.

⁶⁹ J. Harry Shannon [The Rambler, pseud.] “The Rambler Traces the History of Analoatan Island from Early Days,” *Washington Star*, 6 March 1921.

⁷⁰ Webb, 27-34.

Island written in the twentieth century.⁷¹ John Mason retired to Clermont, a family farm in Fairfax County, Virginia, where he died in 1849 at the age of eighty-two.

c. Post-Mason Use, 1833-1861

Following the departure of the Mason family, Theodore Roosevelt Island passed among a series of short-term owners. On 30 July 1834, while the Bank of the United States still held title to the island, a balloon ascension took place from the “Analostin Gardens.”⁷² A grandstand capable of holding 6,000-7,000 spectators had been specially built for the occasion. While a popular success, the ascension proved a financial disaster for the event’s promoter, Nicholas Ash. Evidently the grandstand was far from filled, since people lined the neighboring river banks, hillsides, roofs, and tree tops to watch rather than pay the 50-cent admission fee. Even so, a second balloon ascension, combined with a fireworks display, was seen that fall.⁷³

The bank conveyed the island in trust to Richard Smith in 1838,⁷⁴ who held the property for twelve common tenants. In 1842, one of these tenants, John Carter of Georgetown, purchased the island from the bank for \$8,600.⁷⁵ Together with Alexander Garden, Carter brought the land under commercial cultivation. Carter supplied the financial capital, while Garden lived on-site and supplied the workers employed to cultivate the fields. This venture consisted of 400 peach trees, 150 rose bushes, and varying numbers of asparagus, carrots, parsley, and rhubarb plants.⁷⁶

Carter died in 1850, and two years later William A. Bradley, former mayor of Washington and current city postmaster, purchased the island for \$2,571.50, over \$6,000 less than the sum Carter had paid nine years earlier. One reasonable explanation for such a drastic drop in value is that the causeway had recently been severely damaged by an 1852 flood, and cost several thousand dollars to repair. However, as with the initial construction, this work was paid for at public expense.⁷⁷ Regardless, the soil was presumably still productive, as Bradley rented the majority of the island to tenant farmers. The low sale price is particularly surprising given that the island typically rented for \$900 to \$1,000 per year, providing a quick return on the investment. Bradley also developed a portion of the island as a resort destination, and built a dancing saloon, known from later reports to have adjoined the mansion. He also constructed two wharves, one on the north coast and the other on the east side of the island.⁷⁸ Jacob Powers, a tenant from 1859-63, received a reduction on his rent in exchange for constructing the resort buildings, trimming ornamental trees and shrubs, maintaining the grounds, and making repairs to the Mason-era

⁷¹ Duhamel, 144; Robert G. Ferris, *The Presidents: From the Inauguration of George Washington to the Inauguration of Jimmy Carter: Historic Places Commemorating the Chief Executives of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, 1977), 385.

⁷² Curry, 24.

⁷³ Netherton, “Delicate Beauty and Burly Majesty,” 41.

⁷⁴ Richard Smith, cashier of the office of discount and deposit of the Bank of the United States at the city of Washington, accepted John Mason’s first deed of trust to the Bank of the United States. See Shannon, “The Rambler Traces the History of Analostan Island from Early Days.”

⁷⁵ Curry, 25.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Webb, 144.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

structures. Bradley presumably incorporated the still extant mansion, outhouses, cellars, icehouse, barn, and stables into his development scheme.⁷⁹ On 5 August 1859, the *National Intelligencer* published a short article praising the resort.

*ANALOSTAN ISLAND – One among the many places of resort during the summer season for pic-nic and other pleasure parties is the above-named island. Situated immediately opposite Georgetown, and to the west of our city, it is easy of access from all directions. A pleasure seeker has only to take the omnibus to Georgetown, then go down High street to the river, where he will always find a boat in readiness to take him across to the island. The situation is beautiful, and every convenience is to be found on the island that is conducive of pleasure to the excursionist. The pavilion is large and well built, immediately adjoining a large three-story brick house, which affords ample protection in case of rain, besides furnishing dining and other rooms appropriate to such an establishment. The proprietors are gentlemanly and obliging, and always succeed in sending their visitors home well pleased.*⁸⁰

The mention of the “three story brick house” may refer to a large building located west of the mansion, or another structure to the northwest of the mansion site. Bradley’s name appears above the former in an 1861 map drawn by city surveyor Albert Boschke (Figure 8). It is also possible that the newspaper was inaccurate, and the three story building in question was actually the one story Mason mansion. In this case, the pavilion would correspond with Bradley’s dancing saloon. No further information is available to help settle the matter, but in March 1921, *Washington Star* columnist J. Harry Shannon (“The Rambler”) mentioned that the “pavilion of Tony Rodier,” was present on the island during this time.⁸¹ Shannon also recorded that the resort’s success was due in large part to the efforts of its manager, well-known Georgetown restaurateur Tony Poor.⁸²

d. Civil War-era Occupation and Use, 1861-1865

Following the outbreak of the Civil War in April 1861, Union troops occupied Mason’s Island that May.⁸³ These soldiers departed a year later, in May 1862, but the Army returned to the island in September. These second occupants were members of the Commissary Department, who appear to have operated a storage or distribution camp on the island’s northern section until the end of the war.⁸⁴ A ca. 1865 photograph depicts a small complex of buildings and one long, largely windowless structure, most likely a warehouse, in the vicinity of the old Mason ferry house (Figure 9).⁸⁵ By mid-May 1863, the island also served as the camp and training grounds

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ “Analostan Island,” *National Intelligencer*, 5 August 1859.

⁸¹ Shannon, however, did not explain who this man was or indicate where the pavilion was located. See, J. Harry Shannon [The Rambler, pseud.], “The Rambler Writes of the Charm of Historic Old Analostan,” *Washington Star*, 20 March 1921.

⁸² J. Harry Shannon [The Rambler, pseud.], “The Rambler Reviews and Old Story about Analostan and Its People,” *Washington Star*, 13 March 1921.

⁸³ Civil War-era records typically refer to the island as Mason’s Island, and this naming convention is repeated throughout the following section of the report.

⁸⁴ Curry, 25-26.

⁸⁵ Ibid.; Fanning, 40.

for the 1st District of Columbia Colored Volunteers, an African American regiment composed of local black enlisted men and white officers.

Following President Abraham Lincoln's emancipation of all slaves residing in the District of Columbia on 16 April 1862, the number of fugitive slaves, commonly called "contrabands," escaping to Washington increased dramatically.⁸⁶ Lincoln followed with the Emancipation Proclamation in January 1863, which, in addition to freeing the slaves held in Confederate territory, also made possible black enlistment in the Union Army. Thousands more slaves escaped and moved north. As the war progressed, the area comprising Washington, D.C., and Alexandria, Virginia, became the principal supply center for the entire eastern theater, and the military, government contractors, and private businesses all utilized this influx of freedmen to meet the demands of the war effort.⁸⁷ During the spring of 1863, two white Army chaplains, J. D. Turner and W. G. Raymond, began lobbying the president to raise a regiment from the District's swelling African American population. Lincoln approved their request and in the first week of May 1863 the two men began recruiting for the 1st District of Columbia Colored Volunteers. Scores of contrabands enlisted, and the chaplains also recruited soldiers from hospitals, prisons, and temporary refugee camps.⁸⁸ These new recruits made their first public appearance less than two weeks later, marching through the streets of Washington on the afternoon of 15 May. As the *Washington Star* reported:

They numbered some forty or fifty and wore a red, white and blue badge. Some of them, however, in addition to the badge, wore also a cockade composed of the same colors. They seemed to bear their honors well, notwithstanding the derisive marks they met with as they marched along – coming in several instances from those of their own color. The drillmaster – as we presume – a colored man, seemed to appreciate the dignity of his position to the fullest.⁸⁹

As insulting as these "derisive remarks" no doubt were, the new soldiers could expect far worse at the hands of Confederate troops or even the common citizenry. On 21 August 1862, the Confederate War Department issued General Order No. 60, which established that black soldiers were nothing more than armed slaves in rebellion and would not be treated as prisoners of war. Nevertheless, black recruitment into the Union Army began, most notably through the formation of the 54th Massachusetts Volunteers of African Descent and the Louisiana Native Guard. On 1 May 1863, the Confederate government responded by issuing Congressional Resolution S2, "On

⁸⁶ In mid-May 1861, the first fugitive slaves arrived at the Federal outpost of Fortress Monroe, Virginia, seeking protection from recapture. Union General Benjamin F. Butler, commander of the Department of Virginia, granted this request by employing them as laborers and assistants. Based on their service, he declared the slaves to be contrabands of war, and therefore exempt from the fugitive slave law. This practice quickly became widespread throughout the Union Army, and by the end of the Civil War the government had thousands of "contrabands" employed as soldiers and in military support positions. See Ira Berlin et al., eds., *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation, 1861-1867*, ser. 1, vol. 2, *The Wartime Genesis of Free Labor: The Upper South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 85.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 244

⁸⁸ C. R. Gibbs, *Black, Copper, and Bright: The District of Columbia's Black Civil War Regiment* (Silver Spring, Md.: Three Dimensional Publishing, 2002), 24-31.

⁸⁹ "First Appearance of the Negro Soldiers," *Washington Star*, 15 May 1863.

the Subject of Retaliation,” which reiterated the earlier policy and stated that captured black soldiers would be executed or sold into slavery.⁹⁰ Furthermore, although Washington was the seat of the Federal government, it was also a southern city with many residents sympathetic to the Confederate cause, and overtly hostile to the massive influx of African Americans. In this climate, racially motivated violence was not uncommon. In an effort to avoid such an altercation, the first two companies of volunteers were quickly relocated to Mason’s Island on 19 May.⁹¹ Historian Margaret Leech notes that this removal was so secret that the white recruiting officers were barred from visiting the island under penalty of arrest, and that President Lincoln himself “did not know where the colored soldiers were encamped, but had been driving around Washington with Mrs. Lincoln, trying to find them.”⁹² Despite this secrecy, a gang discovered their location and attacked in early June, severely wounding several soldiers before a detachment of Massachusetts troops arrived to protect them.⁹³ The violence was probably spurred at least in part by War Department General Order No. 143, which, through the establishment of the Bureau of Colored Troops on 22 May 1863, allowed African Americans to serve in the Union Army as regular soldiers rather than volunteers. By 30 June, ten companies had been formed, all stationed on the island.⁹⁴ On this day, the 1st District of Columbia Colored Volunteers was officially re-designated the 1st United States Colored Troops (1st USCT), the first African American regiment formally mustered into federal service.⁹⁵

While encamped on the island, most soldiers of the 1st USCT were housed in typical military barracks: long, narrow, lightweight balloon-frame structures.⁹⁶ The regiment’s officers likely inhabited the Mason mansion and surviving outbuildings, and instructed their men in military etiquette, marching, guard duty, and the proper use and care of firearms. When properly trained and outfitted with Union uniforms, the troops enjoyed a greater degree of public respect, were able to parade as units in the streets of Washington, and were gradually accepted as soldiers by white troops and the general citizenry.⁹⁷ On 11 July 1863, poet Walt Whitman visited the Mason’s Island camp on the occasion of the soldiers’ first payment for military service. His diary entry for that date, although tinged with racial overtones, records his impression of the 1st USCT, and sums up both the grudging respect that the men earned and the pride they felt in their new status as soldiers.

Now the paying is to begin. The Major (paymaster) with his clerk seat themselves at a table – the rolls are before them – the money box is opened – there are packages of five,

⁹⁰ Gibbs, 33.

⁹¹ Company A and Company B were first stationed on Mason’s Island on 19 May 1863. See Jane B. Hewett, ed., *Supplement to the Official Record of the Union and Confederate Armies, Part 2: Record of Events and Itineraries*, vol. 77, ser. 89 (Wilmington, NC: Bradfoot Publishing Company, 1998), 280.

⁹² Margaret Leech, *Reveille in Washington: 1860-1865* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1941), 254.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ The ten companies were mustered in as follows: Company A, 19 May 1863; Company B, 19 May; Company C, June 8; Company D, June 14; Company E, June 17; Company F, June 21; Company G, June 25; Company H, June 27; Company I, June 28, June 29; Company K, June 30. See Hewett, 275-87.

⁹⁵ Gibbs, 50.

⁹⁶ These barracks were probably also used by the soldiers previously stationed on the island, and were likely built by or for the first troops occupying the site in May 1861.

⁹⁷ Gibbs, 50.

ten, twenty-five cent pieces. Here comes the first Company (B), some 82 men, all blacks. Certes we cannot find fault with the appearance of this crowd – negroes though they be. They are manly enough, bright enough, look as if they had the soldier- stuff in them, look hardy, patient many of them real handsome young fellows. The paying, I say has begun. The men are marched up in close proximity. The clerk calls off name after name, and each walks up, receives his money, and passes along out of the way. It is a real study, both to see them come close, and to see them pass away, stand counting their cash – (nearly all of this company get ten dollars and three cents each). . . The regiment numbers today about 1,000 men (including 20 officers, the only whites). Now another company. These get \$5.36 each.⁹⁸ The men look well . . . Occasionally, but not often, there are some thoroughly African physiognomies, very black in color, large protruding lips, low forehead, etc. But I have to say that I do not see one utterly revolting face. Then another company, each man of this getting \$10.03 also.⁹⁹ The pay proceeds very rapidly (the calculation, roll-signing, etc., having been arranged before hand). Then some trouble. One company, by the rigid rules of official computation, gets only 23 cents each man. The company (K) is indignant, and after two or three are paid, the refusal to take the paltry sum is universal, and the company marches off to quarters unpaid.¹⁰⁰ Another company (I) gets only 70 cents. The sullen, lowering, disappointed look is general. Half refuse it in this case. Company G, in full dress, with brass scales on shoulders, looked, perhaps, as well as any of the companies – the men had an unusually alert look. These then are the black troops – or the beginning of them. Well no one can see them, even under these circumstances – their military career in its novitiate – without feeling well pleased with them.¹⁰¹

Less than three weeks later, noted abolitionist and journalist Jane Grey Swisshelm visited the 1st USCT, and included her observations in a dispatch for Minnesota's *St. Cloud Democrat* newspaper.

July 21, 1863 . . . A regiment of colored troops are camped on the opposite side of the Potomac near Georgetown . . . In addition to military tactics they are learning to read and may be seen in the intervals between their drills, in little groups with primers and spelling books conning over their lessons. People here are becoming accustomed to see them in United States uniform, and they are more frequently hailed with signs of approbation than with sneers of scorn.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Among other factors, payment increased according to length of military service. The soldiers of this company, likely Company C, D, or E, had presumably been training for about a month, and therefore earned a moderate sum.

⁹⁹ Based on the amount of payment, Whitman is referring to Company A, which, along with Company B, was the first unit to be mustered into the regiment on 19 May 1863.

¹⁰⁰ As Company K was the last company formed, less than two weeks before Whitman's visit, these soldiers received the least pay.

¹⁰¹ Walt Whitman, "Paying the 1st U.S.C.T.," in *Walt Whitman: Complete Poetry and Collected Prose*, ed. Justin Kaplan (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, Inc., 1982), 1182-84.

¹⁰² Jane Grey Swisshelm, *Crusader and Feminist: Letters of Jane Grey Swisshelm*, ed. Arthur J. Larsen (St. Paul: The Minnesota Historical Society, 1934), 241, quoted in Gibbs, 55.

The 1st USCT departed the island in late July 1863, only two months after the first companies arrived in secret and suffered a racist attack.¹⁰³ During this brief period of time, the men received military training and helped temper an unreceptive, hostile citizenry. The black soldiers trained on Mason's Island served with distinction at the Battles of Chaffin's Farm, Fair Oaks, and Fort Fischer. Members of the 1st USCT also fought in the 24 May 1864 Union victory at Wilson's Wharf, the only battle in Virginia, and possibly of the entire Civil War, in which nearly all the Federal forces were African American. This victory proved that black troops were capable of fighting on their own without extensive support from white soldiers. The regiment was mustered out on 29 September 1865, with 185 men killed, and received an enthusiastic reception upon their return to Washington on 8 October. A waiting crowd lined the Sixth Street wharf as the regiment's transport steamer docked.¹⁰⁴ While most who turned out to welcome the returning soldiers were fellow African Americans, who held a "just pride in the fame of their brethren," white Washington also took notice.¹⁰⁵ On 10 October the regiment was treated to an elaborate banquet and paraded on the White House grounds. President Andrew Johnson reviewed the troops and gave a thirty-minute address in which he thanked the men for their service.¹⁰⁶ The significance of the moment was not lost on the writers of the Boston *Evening Transcript*, who recognized it as "one of the remarkable events of the present time," and evidence that the nation was proceeding toward the "perfect recognition of the democratic idea as applied to men of every station, rank, and color."¹⁰⁷

The departure of the 1st USCT from Analostan Island in July 1863 coincided with the first compulsory draft imposed by the Federal government. Local conscription followed in early August, but this time white troops reported to the island.¹⁰⁸ While these men most likely received some military training while stationed there, it was officially designated as a "draft rendezvous," evidently a place where men were initially accepted into the Army, inspected for physical disabilities, and awaited assignment in permanent units.¹⁰⁹ In early October, the 109th New York State Volunteers arrived in Washington under the command of Colonel Benjamin Franklin Tracy,¹¹⁰ and marched to the island from the B&O Railroad Depot.¹¹¹ Their arrival had been much anticipated by Private Lyons Wakeman of the 153d New York Regiment, who was stationed in Alexandria, Virginia, as part of the defenses of Washington. Wakeman, whose real

¹⁰³ Gibbs, 57.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 164.

¹⁰⁵ "The First Regiment District of Columbia Colored Troops: Their Welcome Home – Enthusiastic Reception – They Will be Feasted Tomorrow," *National Republican*, 9 October 1865, reproduced in Gibbs, 165.

¹⁰⁶ Gibbs, 166-70.

¹⁰⁷ *National Republican*, 13 October 1865, quoted in Gibbs, 167.

¹⁰⁸ Netherton, "Delicate Beauty," 45.

¹⁰⁹ "Army and Navy News: Board to Inspect Drafted Men," *Medical and Surgical Reporter*, 16 January 1864.

¹¹⁰ In 1895, Tracy was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions during the Battle of the Wilderness, fought 6 May 1864. According to the official citation, Tracy "seized the colors and led the regiment when other regiments had retired and then reformed his line and held it." Later in the war he was promoted to the rank of brigadier general. He also served as Secretary of the Navy from 1889-93 under the administration of President Benjamin Harrison, where he played an integral role in the formation of the modern United States Navy. See Benjamin F. Cooling, *Benjamin Franklin Tracy, Father of the American Fighting Navy* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1973).

¹¹¹ Mike High, *The C&O Canal Companion*, updated ed. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), "Updates and Errata: Falls Region, Mason's Island,"

<http://www.press.jhu.edu/books/supplemental/canal/mile0masonsland.html> (accessed 29 October 2007).

name was Sarah Rosetta Wakeman, had disguised herself as a man and secretly enlisted in the Union Army in August 1862, using her earnings to help pay off her poor family's considerable debt. Around 13 October 1863, she hired a man from Georgetown to row her across the river to the island, where she spent two hours visiting with her friend Henry Perry and her second cousin, Perry Wilder, who were both serving in the 109th New York. In February 1864, the 153d New York was sent to Louisiana, where Wakeman fought in the Battle of Pleasant Hill, her first combat. When she died that May in a New Orleans military hospital, her gender was finally discovered, but the staff chose not to reveal her secret, instead burying her under a simple headstone inscribed with her assumed name.¹¹²

In November 1863, 811 enlisted men and thirty-three officers occupied Mason's Island.¹¹³ In December, the numbers were 785 and thirty-seven, respectively.¹¹⁴ By January 1864, the military population had dropped to 698 men and nineteen officers.¹¹⁵ Although these numbers probably continued to decline, the 109th New York remained on Mason's Island until March 1864.¹¹⁶ The draft rendezvous itself remained in operation until late April or early May, and for most of this time the draftees were evidently allowed to live with their families on site. However, an order given on 6 April 1864, barred all women and children from the island, most likely as a means of encouraging the orderly relocation of civilians in advance of the closing of the draft rendezvous.¹¹⁷

By May of that year, the island had been turned over for use as a temporary refugee camp to serve the increasing numbers of African American refugees arriving in Washington, D.C. The influx that had bolstered the region's war economy and spurred the creation of the 1st USCT a year earlier had by this time exceeded the government's ability to adequately care for the displaced former slaves. Established camps were overrun as existing resources proved woefully inadequate. Freedman's Village, located nearby on the former grounds of the Lee family's Arlington Estate, was the largest of all the camps, but even it became dangerously overcrowded. Military authorities began diverting new arrivals to the recently vacated military camp on Mason's Island.¹¹⁸ The camp would continue for just over a year, until its disbandment in June 1865, but in this short time it would undergo a drastic transformation.

Upon arrival on Mason's Island, the refugees found shelter in the military barracks, but initially were provided with little else to meet even their most basic needs. Supplies were scant at the camps the government had planned on maintaining; the *ad hoc* situation on Mason's Island was

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ U.S. War Dept., *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, ser. 1, vol. 29 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1890), 523.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 608.

¹¹⁵ U.S. War Dept., *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, ser. 1, vol. 33 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1891), 472.

¹¹⁶ Historian Nan Netherton references the January-March 1864 log book for Mason's Island, which records that Col. B. F. Tracy was the commanding officer of the camp. See Netherton, "Delicate Beauty," 46.

¹¹⁷ Special Order 51, HQ Draft Rendezvous, Mason's Island, 6 April 1864, Entry 3868, RG 110: Records of the Provost Marshal General's Bureau (Civil War), National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland.

¹¹⁸ Berlin et al., 63

far worse. From the outset, the War Department planned on utilizing the island as an employment depot for those freedmen capable of supporting themselves, a short-term stopover until they found work and moved on. Given the transitory nature of the camp, accommodations were deliberately spartan. Army officials blamed what they deemed to be commodious living conditions at Freedman's Village for its residents' reluctance to depart and make room for incoming refugees. Consequently, they were determined to prevent a similar situation from arising on Mason's Island, lest comfortable facilities make the residents unwilling to seek outside employment.¹¹⁹ Although this plan may have seemed reasonable in the abstract, it immediately fell apart on the ground. Contrary to its original purpose, officials relocated former slaves to the island regardless of their prospects of finding employment. By the time Lt. Colonel Elias M. Greene, Chief Quartermaster for the Department of Washington, officially took over management of the camp around 15 June 1864, it was already seriously overcrowded.¹²⁰ Both Greene and Reverend Danforth B. Nichols, the on-site superintendent who occupied the Mason mansion, were overmatched.¹²¹ Jammed with people and lacking many basic supplies, Mason's Island quickly devolved into a state of disease-ridden squalor.

With the government unable to adequately care for its charges, the Association of Friends for the Aid and Elevation of the Freedmen stepped in to relieve what they recognized as the "great suffering and destitution on Mason's Island."¹²² Organized in Philadelphia on 6 January 1864, the Association of Friends was a sub-branch of the Quaker-based Religious Society of Friends, with offices located throughout the northern states. For two centuries prior to the Civil War, the Friends had been passionate social reformers, campaigning for temperance and anti-tobacco controls, equal rights for women, establishment of mental health facilities, public education, prison reform, fair and honest treatment of Native Americans, and the abolition of slavery.¹²³ Although the Emancipation Proclamation heralded an end to slavery in America, it also spawned a vast refugee population largely lacking in its basic physical needs, education, and spiritual guidance. The Society of Friends responded to all three concerns. Specifically, the newly formed Association of Friends chose to concentrate its humanitarian efforts around Washington, D.C., believing that the most work could be accomplished by directing "its labors toward a single community of the Freed-people."¹²⁴ Much of these labors focused on Mason's Island itself.¹²⁵

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 259.

¹²⁰ Maj. E. H. Ludington and Maj. C. E. Compton to Col. James A. Hardie, Washington, D.C., 30 July 1864, Letters Received, ser. 15, RG 159: Records of the Office of the Inspector General, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., quoted in Berlin et al., 337-44.

¹²¹ Nichols was a ranking member of the American Missionary Association, a benevolent society founded in 1846 that worked toward the elimination of slavery, the education of African Americans, the promotion of racial equality, and the dissemination of Christian values. By July 1863 he had been appointed Superintendent of Freedmen for the District of Columbia. See Danforth B. Nichols, "The Negroes near Washington: Official Report of Superintendent Nichols," *New York Times*, 9 August 1863.

¹²² *First Annual Report of the Board and Managers of the Association of Friends for the Aid and Elevation of the Freedmen, with a List of Officers for the Year 1865* (Philadelphia: Merrihew & Son, Printers, 1865), 4.

¹²³ Oliver S. Heckman, "Pennsylvania Quakers in Southern Construction," *Pennsylvania History* 13, no. 4 (October 1946): 248.

¹²⁴ *First Annual Report*, 17.

¹²⁵ In addition to the freedman's camps at Freedman's Village and Mason's Island, several other camps were located in the vicinity of Washington, including Camp Beckwith, Camp Rucker, Camp Todd, and Camp Wadsworth. See Nichols, "The Negroes Near Washington."

By July the camp's population had ballooned to nearly 1,200 people, more than half of them children.¹²⁶ Early in the month, Louisa J. Roberts, a ranking member of the Association of Friends, received letters describing the plight of the freedmen on Mason's Island and shortly thereafter set out to conduct a personal inspection.¹²⁷ Her letter back to Philadelphia described in detail the miserable conditions she encountered, but also the efforts she had already made to improve the situation.

The sights that met our eyes were revolting. The quarters have been barracks for soldiers, and are well ventilated and comfortable, so far as the buildings can make them; but when that is said all is said. The poor inmates are destitute of every comfort, ragged filthy, and lying on the floor; few of them having even straw. Nearly the half are sick, and we could say actually dying for something they could eat. Raw meat, tainted by the extreme warm weather, was lying in sight of poor creatures who were in the agonies of death, and raw beans and salt pork and beef, that had been issued to those who were too sick to prepare them for food, or to eat it if prepared by others, were scattered everywhere. Piles of rags and dirty clothes lay in every corner, and at every place where the poor sufferers found rest for their aching bones . . .

. . . I went to the person in command [Nichols], and told him we would like to have a place to prepare food for the sick, and that we had the day before found two women who we believed worthy of trust, and would do whatever cooking was necessary.

He gave us one of the kitchens, put our two cooks on the payroll at \$6 per month, had a load of wood hauled, and gave us the control of as many men as we wanted. I undertook the supervision of this department, while Sally followed the doctor and his assistant through the wards, with crackers and beef. The floors were scrubbed, and our cooks soon had apples stewed and gruel made, and many a poor famishing creature was comforted.

*I then went into two of the barracks, and ordered all the children who could walk to be taken down to the river and thoroughly washed. Those who were too sick, I had bathed in tepid water, of which there was plenty around a great round stove. Then to each clean child we distributed clothing. We set our scrubbers to cleaning the houses; had lime scattered all around the outside; and, feeling we had done all we then could do, we had our buggy brought . . .*¹²⁸

Roberts concluded with a plea for donations of food and clothing, noting that the "exigencies of the military service engross everything now."¹²⁹ This statement may have been intended as a general reference to the constraints imposed by the war, or more specifically, the bolstering of Washington's defenses in light of Confederate General Jubal A. Early's recent incursion into Maryland. Early led an unsuccessful raid on Washington from 11-12 July 1864, and while

¹²⁶ Berlin, et al., 259.

¹²⁷ *First Annual Report*, 5.

¹²⁸ Louisa J. Roberts to the Association of Friends for the Aid and Elevation of the Freedmen, Camp Todd, Virginia, July 1864, quoted in *First Annual Report*, 5-6.

¹²⁹ Roberts to the Association of Friends, July 1864, quoted in *First Annual Report*, 7.

Roberts does not mention the attack in her letter, an article published in the *Liberator* newspaper two months later recorded that, “At the time of the late raid, every man and boy on Mason’s Island was summoned forth, and a fort was thrown up which was called Fort Greene.”¹³⁰ Although the article does not provide any context for this report, the short statement seems to reference Early’s unsuccessful attack, as at the time all available soldiers were redeployed to the city’s northern boundary, almost certainly leaving the camp’s residents to defend the island themselves. Any fortification resulting from such circumstances would have necessarily been makeshift and temporary, and the fact that no Fort Greene appears on any area defense maps supports this conclusion. Additionally, this “fort” was clearly named after Lt. Colonel Greene, and it was not common military practice to designate forts after the local quartermaster. Since at least April 1864, however, the area encompassing Freedman’s Village had been informally known as Greene Heights, as the colonel had helped establish the settlement the previous May.¹³¹ Fort Greene was therefore most likely also an informal title and it does not appear in any known military or civilian records.

Following a brief stay in Philadelphia, Roberts returned to Mason’s Island on 21 July 1864,¹³² bringing with her 447 donated garments valued at \$484.¹³³ By this time the Association of Friends had also appropriated \$250 for relief efforts and sent teacher Sarah Anne Cadwallader to the island in preparation for establishing a school there.¹³⁴ Upon her arrival, Roberts was dismayed that the island was more crowded than she had left it a week before, and that the measles had broken out among the women and children. Conversely, she was pleased to find that “the promiscuous herding together of men and women had been forbidden,” that incidences of other diseases were declining, and that the opening of a hospital had been sanctioned.¹³⁵ Her primary concerns centered on the continuing difficulties of providing adequate clothing and food. The government had not furnished clothing or bedding, and the freedmen relied on their own fires to keep them warm at night, which, despite the season, Roberts described as unusually cold. She also noted that, including the clothing she had arrived with, one thousand garments had been distributed, “yet one scarcely sees the good they have done.”¹³⁶ Food was an even larger problem than clothing. Although there was a sufficient quantity available, indeed “abundance even to wastefulness,” cooking the food proved much more difficult than obtaining it.¹³⁷ Most distressingly, each of the barracks, which housed some 100 people apiece, contained at most two

¹³⁰ “A Freedman’s Village,” *Liberator*, 16 September 1864.

¹³¹ D. B. Nichols to Lt. Col. Greene, 2 April 1864, enclosing Diagram of Freedman’s Village, both enclosed in Lt. Col. Elias M. Greene to Maj. C.H. Raymond, 25 May 1864, Letters Received, ser. 360, Colored Troops Division, RG 94: Records of the Adjutant General’s Office, 1789s-1917, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., image reproduced in Berlin, et al., 335.

¹³² Louisa J. Roberts, “Extracts from a Report Offered to Friends’ Association for the Aid and Elevation of the Freedmen,” *Friends’ Intelligencer*, 18 August 1864.

¹³³ In addition to a narrative account of the Friends’ work at Mason’s Island, pages 21-24 of their *First Annual Report* contain an item-by-item breakdown of all goods donated to the camp from 20 July 1864 to 4 January 1865. Each entry typically notes the date of donation, the type and amount of each item, and the total value of the shipment. Items range from basic goods such as clothing and crackers to much-needed hospital supplies to more luxurious novelties including gingerbread and blackberry syrup.

¹³⁴ *First Annual Report*, 8.

¹³⁵ Roberts, “Extracts from a Report.”

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

spiders or Dutch ovens with which to bake bread.¹³⁸ Although these few cooking tools were kept constantly in use, they were wholly inadequate to meet the demand. Instead, many people made do any way they could, such as rolling up their bread dough and baking it in the ashes of a fire. Others simply went hungry. Appalled, Roberts purchased nine additional ovens, and brought up the need for additional cooking facilities with Lt. Colonel Greene. He apologized, but claimed that any such improvements would take time. A frustrated Roberts wrote to her colleagues in Philadelphia asserting that the “poor colored dependents must wait until they (the soldiers) are served. Meanwhile they are dying for the *bare necessities* of life.”¹³⁹

Roberts also described a fluctuating camp population. Despite being inundated with sick, incapacitated adults and young children, the island began to take on its intended role as an employment depot. National Archives microfilm M1902 includes a forty-six-page register of freedmen departing Mason’s Island from its inception in May 1864 through its closure in July 1865.¹⁴⁰ While many of the departing freedmen were hired out to work in and around Washington, others, often in groups of a dozen or more individuals, were sent much farther to waiting employers in New York, New England, and the Midwest. Roberts herself returned to Philadelphia with thirty women and children, and noted that “three times the number might have found good homes.”¹⁴¹ Many other freedmen, including groups of children, set out on their own. The register only records that they had “gone to do for themselves.” Given the dangers inherent in such a decision, the choice to leave alludes to the terrible conditions at the island; even the unknown was apparently preferable to one more day in camp.

In addition to Roberts’ return to the island on 21 July, two Army officers also arrived that day under orders from Secretary of War Edwin Stanton to conduct an official inspection. The inspectors, Major. E. H. Ludington and Major C. E. Compton, largely echoed Roberts’ earlier reports in their description of the camp’s condition, although with considerably less compassion:

We found dirt and disorder reigning supreme. The people were tumbled into barracks without classification, and this, too, in face of the theory that only those were kept upon the Island who were candidates to go out to service. We found infirm, disabled, sick and children here in numbers – just as they had arrived in fact. If we are to credit the statements of contrabands, men and women were thrust in the same barracks, and slept on the floor promiscuously. Our ears were assailed with all sorts of complaints – mostly about want of clothes; non-payment of wages for their time passed in utter idleness; those

¹³⁸ A spider is a large, usually cast iron, frying pan with a rounded bottom, long handle, and three legs. The overall appearance is vaguely organic and is believed to account for the pan’s name. Historically, spiders were used in fireplaces or over open pits, as the legs enabled the cook to place the pan directly over the hot coals. See Alice Ross, “There’s History in Your Frying Pan,” *The Journal of Antique Collectibles* (January 2001): <http://www.journalofantiques.com/hearthjan01.htm>.

¹³⁹ Roberts, “Extracts from a Report.”

¹⁴⁰ As is common throughout period documents, the camp is erroneously labeled as Mason’s Island, Virginia, on the register despite being located within the boundaries of Washington, D.C. See “Register of Freedmen Departing Mason’s Island, VA, May 18, 1864 – July 18, 1865,” in *National Archives Microfilm M1902: Records of the Field Offices for the District of Columbia, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1870*, roll 19, slides 536-82, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

¹⁴¹ Roberts, “Extracts from a Report.”

*not being so well situated as those in the Village; the crowded conditions of the barracks; the want of a hospital; the refusal of Lt. Col. Greene to furnish them transportation to visit their friends in the village, and the like. We thought their only well-founded complaints those about the barracks and hospital. Lt. Col. Greene's excuses for this state of things are annexed marked "Exhibit A."*¹⁴²

"Exhibit A" consists of a letter from Greene contending that he had designated men from Freedman's Village to clean and reorganize the camp at Mason's Island, but that they had been reassigned before completing the task.¹⁴³ When the inspectors returned a week later, they found that this work had been carried out in the interim. The barracks were clean, the infirm sent to recuperate at Freedman's Village, the sexes separated, and the hospital established.¹⁴⁴ Overall, they determined that the "present condition of the island is as good as circumstances will admit." Nevertheless, Ludington and Compton favored closing the camp and recommended that all residents be removed "as soon as practicable."¹⁴⁵ This contention stemmed in large part from an obvious lack of faith in the officials charged with the freedmen's well-being.

*At Mason's Island we discovered the worst of faults – that of general mismanagement, resulting from incapacity or negligence. The Superintendent here, Dr. Nichols, made upon us an unfavorable impression as to capacity, and despite the excuses of Lt. Col. Greene, we consider the condition in which the island was first found to be so disgraceful as to demand the removal of Dr. Nichols.*¹⁴⁶

Despite this condemnation, Nichols remained. Greene did not. On 29 August 1864, he was formally relieved as Chief Quartermaster for the Department of Washington, and in September transferred to the western theatre.¹⁴⁷ As this new posting was significantly less desirable than his position in Washington, the transfer was likely a punishment for his perceived mismanagement.¹⁴⁸ Regardless of whether or not Greene was actually to blame for the appalling state of the Mason's Island camp, conditions improved dramatically after his departure. Although

¹⁴² Ludington and Compton to Hardie, quoted in Berlin et al., 339.

¹⁴³ Berlin et al., 345 n. 2.

¹⁴⁴ Dr. Amon C. Taber, a surgeon and Union Army recruiter, was in charge of the hospital on Mason's Island. He later served with the 20th U.S. Infantry in Louisiana, and upon his death in 1891 was remembered as a "well-known and highly-respected citizen of Washington." See "Death of Dr. Taber," *Washington Post*, 22 November 1891.

¹⁴⁵ Ludington and Compton to Hardie, quoted in Berlin et al., 340, 344.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 343.

¹⁴⁷ U.S. War Dept., *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, ser. 1, vol. 43 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1893), 899; Berlin et al., 260.

¹⁴⁸ While the deplorable conditions on Mason's Island almost certainly spurred Greene's removal, he also faced harsh criticism regarding the management of Freedman's Village and the government's freedmen-operated farms outside Washington. Ludington and Compton went so far as to accuse him of reinforcing the erroneous belief of some former slaves that the government would simply support them indefinitely without requiring serious work. Irrespective of the situation on Mason's Island, his fellow officers do not appear to have held Greene in high regard, with the exception of Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs, who routinely defended his subordinate's policies. Finally, several months after he left Washington, Greene was accused of embezzling money from the Contraband Fund, the general account from which the costs of running the various camps were drawn. While this charge was never pursued, it nevertheless raises concerns regarding Greene's character and whether he really did provide the best possible care for the freedmen on Mason's Island. See Berlin et al., 259-60.

Colonel John A. Elison replaced Greene as Chief Quartermaster for the Department of Washington, much of the authority regarding the freedmen had already been delegated earlier in the month to Captain Joseph M. Brown, assistant quartermaster and later chief of the new Bureau of Freedmen and Government Farms.¹⁴⁹ Brown would continue in this role under Elison and bear primary responsibility for the condition and management of all Washington-area camps.

In August, the Association of Friends sent Margaret Preston to the island to work as nurse at the newly constructed hospital,¹⁵⁰ where, despite the efforts of the staff, a lack of adequate medical supplies resulted in the deaths of 118 freedmen in that month alone.¹⁵¹ The Friends responded by establishing a sanitary committee comprising Roberts and seven additional members, and appropriated \$500 for their use in purchasing the much needed supplies.¹⁵² Following receipt of the supplies, the death rate on the island was more than cut in half, with sixty deaths recorded in September.¹⁵³ According to the *Liberator*, the hospital was an “absolutely model one,” well-ventilated, neat, clean, and employing a kind, competent staff to treat the thirty patients convalescing there. Moreover, as the camp was “supplied with cows which hail from rebeldom,” the hospital population received ten gallons of milk per day.¹⁵⁴ The cows also provided enough milk for fifty families from the general camp population, signifying a marked increase in the quality of their diet. Finally, a Sunday school had been set up in William A. Bradley’s former dancing saloon, described in the article as a piazza “on the one side” of the Mason mansion. Each week a white priest, likely Rev. Nichols, held services in the morning and an African American preacher did so in the afternoon.¹⁵⁵

Roberts returned with fellow Friend Margaret Griscom on 23 September, and was generally impressed by the condition of the camp. The hospital was well-supplied, the barracks clean, and the freedmen in significantly better health. Her most pressing concern became the lack of potable water on the island, as the only source remained John Mason’s original well. Moreover, those wishing to draw water were responsible for supplying their own rope and bucket, with “wrangling and contention” frequently breaking out as a result. Anyone who could not acquire these items by begging or by force was obliged to drink from the impure water filling the marsh or that of the river itself, an activity which was responsible for much of the remaining incidences of sickness and death on the island. Roberts purchased additional buckets and made a special request of Elison to locate another source of drinking water, as the entire population of the island, “teachers and all,” suffered as a result of the current situation.¹⁵⁶

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 260, 344-45.

¹⁵⁰ *First Annual Report*, 9; “Extracts from Second Annual Report of Friends’ Association of Philadelphia for the Aid and Elevation of the Freedmen,” *Friends Intelligencer*, ca. May 1866.

¹⁵¹ 1st Lt. Kilburn Knox to Col. James A. Hardie, Washington, D.C., 13 October 1864, Letters Received, ser. 15, RG 159: Records of the Office of the Inspector General, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., quoted in Berlin et al., 350.

¹⁵² *First Annual Report*, 10.

¹⁵³ Knox to Hardie, quoted in Berlin et al., 350.

¹⁵⁴ “A Freedmen’s Village.”

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Louisa J. Roberts to Association of Friends for the Aid and Elevation of the Freeman, 13 October 1864, quoted in *First Annual Report*, 10-12.

This suffering was, however, slight when compared to that which the freedmen had already endured. Entire families had been devastated. Roberts and Griscom met with several mothers who had watched helplessly as every one of their children died. As this was Roberts' third humanitarian mission to the island, she knew many of the survivors, and wrote with earnest sympathy that "wives, husbands, children, with tearful eyes, answered my inquiries after their companions, with these words, 'Dey is gone to de graveyard.'"¹⁵⁷ She also reported that many of these deaths were caused by scurvy, a disease caused by Vitamin C deficiency due to a lack of fruits and vegetables in the diet. However, she was optimistic about a new program by which surplus rations were sold and the proceeds used to supply vegetables for the camp.¹⁵⁸ Roberts and Griscom returned to Philadelphia in October, bringing with them fifteen men, women, and children, the Association of Friends having obtained their lodging and employment in advance.¹⁵⁹

That same month 1st Lieutenant Kilburn Knox conducted a second military inspection of the camp. He reported that the rations were all of good quality, except for the "Indian meal," which was "musty and sour." Moreover, the government had begun furnishing "good and substantial" clothing with a fixed price set on each article by the Quartermaster Department and reimbursed through the Contraband Fund. Wood was also issued for cooking, washing, and other such purposes. Given the improved conditions, the island's death rate continued to decline, with only eleven deaths recorded from 1-13 October. Although the water supply remained limited, a second well was currently being dug, and in Knox's opinion would supply sufficient water for use by the camp. He also mentioned that a guard of twelve soldiers was stationed on the island under the command of a sergeant, and that they were in place primarily to prevent freedmen from "straying around the country at their leisure," rather than as protection against an external threat.¹⁶⁰ A group of soldiers from the Veteran Reserve Corps had been reported on the island that September, and Knox was most likely describing the same troops.¹⁶¹ They are probably the soldiers who appear in two ca. 1862-64 photographs of the island (Figures 10 and 11).

Knox also provided a description of the camp itself, the only such written account on record. The camp contained seven barracks, all comfortable and in good repair. Six measured 100' long x 20'

¹⁵⁷ Roberts to Association of Friends, 13 October 1864, quoted in *First Annual Report*, 11.

¹⁵⁸ War Department General Order 30, 25 January 1864, defined the so-called "contraband ration" as ten ounces of pork or bacon, or one pound of fresh beef per day; one pound of corn meal five times per week, and one pound of flour or soft bread, or twelve ounces of hard bread, twice per week. Unfixed, smaller amounts of beans, peas, hominy, salt, sugar, vinegar, and potatoes were to be distributed "when practicable;" along with soap and candles. Women and children were also authorized to receive roasted rye coffee or tea. See U.S. War Dept., *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, ser. 3, vol. 4 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1900), 44-45.

¹⁵⁹ Roberts to Association of Friends, 13 October 1864, quoted in *First Annual Report*, 12.

¹⁶⁰ Knox to Hardie, quoted in Berlin et al., 251.

¹⁶¹ "A Freedman's Village." The Veteran Reserve Corps, originally the Invalid Corps, was a military reserve unit within the Union Army comprised of partially disabled or otherwise infirmed soldiers who were still fit for light duty, thus allowing greater numbers of able-bodied troops to engage in active combat. Soldiers of the Veteran Reserve Corps were typically employed behind the front lines as cooks, orderlies, nurses, or as was the case at Mason's Island, guards. For more information on Veteran Reserve Corps, see U.S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, ser. 3, vol. 5 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1900), 543-68.

wide, while the seventh was about 150' long x 30' wide, the same dimensions as the hospital building. Another building functioned as the camp's commissary depot, presumably operated by an employee of the Quartermaster Department whom Knox identified as "Commissary of Subsistence for the Camp." Six smaller buildings housed "offices, guard rooms, and etc.," with at least one likely servicing the camp clerk, also an employee of the Quartermaster Department. "All these buildings," Knox continued, "were built as Barracks for the use of Colored troops." He noted the camp was "about to erect another building," to be used as a school room and meeting house, and that after the onset of winter the freedmen could fill the island's "fine, large" icehouse.¹⁶²

In most respects, Knox's description coincides with a ca. July-October 1864 plan of the camp drawn by the Quartermasters Department (Figure 12).¹⁶³ Nevertheless, omissions and discrepancies exist between the details of the two accounts. While the plan includes seven barracks, labeled as contraband quarters, each is listed at 101' x 20'-6", corresponding to Knox's description of six of the barracks but not the final, larger structure. Moreover, the plan depicts the hospital as comprising two separate, identical structures, while Knox specifically referenced a single, well-ventilated "hospital building" administered by the Medical Director of the Department of Washington.¹⁶⁴ However, the 16 September *Liberator* article and Robert's report of 13 October both refer to the island's "hospitals."¹⁶⁵ This use of the plural suggests that the two separate hospital buildings shown in the plan may have been actually been in place, especially since by this time the facility was also receiving patients from Washington and Georgetown in addition to caring for the camp residents.¹⁶⁶ The six smaller buildings mentioned by Knox do appear on the plan, although the guard house, which is shown to the far west of the camp at river's edge, is not one of them. Two are listed as employees' quarters, likely for the clerk and commissary workers, and the rest as the superintendent's office, teacher's quarters, surgeon's and steward's quarters, and a final building reserved for "lunatic patients and attendant." Knox's "large, clean" icehouse appears on the plan as an old icehouse, re-appropriated as a storehouse.¹⁶⁷ A 30' x 60' masonry school is also included in the plan. Abutting the east facade of the Mason mansion, it fits the description of the former dancing saloon-turned-Sunday school reported in the *Liberator* the month before. This school and a few additional structures shown on the plan, the laundry, stable, small icehouse, and three small quarters, are left out of Knox's

¹⁶² Knox to Hardie, quoted in Berlin et al., 349-51. Although Knox states that the buildings were built for the use of the 1st USCT, if the reports of the 1861-62 Army occupation of the island are correct, the regiment may have actually occupied existing buildings constructed for the use of the soldiers previously stationed there.

¹⁶³ This four month range is extrapolated from the buildings shown in the plan. While it includes the hospital, established in late July, it does not include the upcoming school room and meeting house mentioned by Knox, which was erected by early November. The plan is also color-coded, with masonry structures shaded gray and wooden structures brown. Regarding erection of the new school, see Helen G. Longstreth to the Education Committee of Friends' Association for the Aid and Elevation of the Freedmen, Philadelphia, 9 November 1864, reprinted as "Report of a Visit to Mason's Island and Camp Wadsworth," *Friends' Intelligencer*, 17 December 1864.

¹⁶⁴ Knox to Hardie, quoted in Berlin et al., 349-50.

¹⁶⁵ "A Freedman's Village," Roberts to Association of Friends, 13 October 1864, quoted in *First Annual Report*, 11.

¹⁶⁶ Roberts to Association of Friends, 13 October 1864, quoted in *First Annual Report*, 11.

¹⁶⁷ Likely built by William A. Bradley, with the remainder of the masonry structures dating to John Mason's ownership of the island.

report altogether. The four sinks included on the plan were most likely latrines, although one may represent the location of the island's second well.

Friends Helen G. Longstreth and James Mott next visited Mason's Island on 4 and 6 November 1864. They noted that it had recently become a "Government reception camp," but did not explain the significance of this designation. The camp's condition continued to improve, and Longstreth was happy to report that, "The sanitary arrangements are good. Cleanliness is apparent throughout, and it is evident that the sanitary officer does his duty. He has the floors of the barracks cleaned every day, and there is no rubbish or offal to be seen on the premises."¹⁶⁸ Even more impressively, only four patients were receiving treatment at the hospitals despite the fact that the second well was still under construction.¹⁶⁹ The new school room, however, had been completed, and Longstreth described it as "large, well lighted and ready for the stoves which are promised this week."¹⁷⁰ Although she did not indicate its location within the camp, the fact that Longstreth, as well as Knox, used the term "school room," rather than school house or school, implies that it was not a free-standing structure but rather an addition to an existing building. During the 1936 HABS investigation, architect Stuart Barnett documented the remnants of a 56'-3" x 18'-3" brick addition to the south of the Mason mansion's central block (Figure 5).¹⁷¹ As this addition is absent from the ca. July-October 1864 plan of the camp, it postdates the drawing and is in all likelihood the new school room described by Longstreth.¹⁷² She also noted the discontinuance of a school taught by Superintendent Nichols' daughter, which had presumably met in the former dancing saloon. This decision placed all of the children under the care of the Association of Friends, and while it is unclear whether or not the closure was planned to coincide with the completion of the their new school room, Longstreth was confident that the present group of approximately 100 students could all be accommodated in this "commodious" space.¹⁷³

During their stay on the island, Longstreth and Mott visited every barrack and talked with the residents. While Louisa J. Roberts encountered death and disease seemingly everywhere upon her first visit, Longstreth and Mott now found a camp population whose greatest hardship appeared to be boredom. After observing that most people simply sat "listlessly around the stoves, evidently suffering for want of something to occupy their time," the Friends received permission from Captain Brown to establish an industrial school so that the freedmen could be employed in making new and mending partially worn clothing. The Friends agreed to supply the necessary teachers while the government would provide a suitable location and furnish cut

¹⁶⁸ "Report of a Visit to Mason's Island and Camp Wadsworth."

¹⁶⁹ Longstreth uses the plural, further indicating the presence of more than one hospital building.

¹⁷⁰ "Report of a Visit to Mason's Island and Camp Wadsworth."

¹⁷¹ Labeled "Later Addition" in Figure 5.

¹⁷² This addition was almost certainly not constructed after the mid-nineteenth century, as the island and mansion fell into an escalating state of disuse and disrepair (see below, section e. Absentee Ownership and Ephemeral Use: 1865-1899). The absence of the addition on the plan and the unlikelihood of its construction after the Civil War-era combine to create a very short time period during which the addition could have been built. Further, the only construction known to have occurred on the island during this time was the new school room. Given the available evidence, the most reasonable conclusion is that the south addition to the Mason mansion was purpose-built as the Friends' school room from late October to early November 1864.

¹⁷³ "Report of a Visit to Mason's Island and Camp Wadsworth."

clothing. Brown, however, stated that he was unwilling to make any “costly outlays,” as the camp would probably be closed soon “on account of the unhealthiness of the island during several months of the year.”¹⁷⁴ In addition to occupying their time, learning valuable skills, and, depending on the quality of the product, the possibility of earning pay, Longstreth felt the industrial school would benefit the freedmen by preparing them for the coming day when they would have to be self-sufficient. In her words, “the idea of labor would be associated with their earliest experience of a life of freedom.”¹⁷⁵ A letter written on 23 November by one of the teachers on Mason’s Island explained that the conventional school was performing well, holding day and night sessions with over sixty children as well as some adults. The industrial school had also recently started up, with a girls’ sewing class held every Tuesday and Thursday.¹⁷⁶

Although not discussed in their official report, Longstreth and Mott were not the only visitors to Mason’s Island in early November. Sojourner Truth, a leading African American abolitionist and later a pioneering women’s rights suffragette, had come to Washington, D.C., that fall to meet with the area’s freedmen and to seek an audience with President Lincoln. While Truth did have at least one meeting with Lincoln, held at the White House on 29 October 1864, and remained active within the area’s community of freedmen until at least 1866, details regarding her specific whereabouts and activities during this time are scant. Historian Nell Irvin Painter contends that Truth’s “first stop” after arriving in Washington was at Mason’s Island, but provides no specific date for her visit to the camp.¹⁷⁷ While Truth may have traveled to the island before meeting with Lincoln, she definitely did so afterward. Years later, during an 1879 interview, she recalled that Lincoln “wanted me to see to the colored people at Arlington Heights and Mason’s Island, where they came running in and died like cattle.”¹⁷⁸ A short letter written by Truth on 3 November 1864 shows that she was indeed on the island in the days immediately following their meeting, but offers little insight into the purpose of her visit, only noting that the freedmen “are all *delighted* to hear me talk. I think I am doing good. I am *needed* here.”¹⁷⁹ However, she did note that Superintendent Nichols secured her a comfortable room at his house, the former Mason mansion, and that he treated her very kindly during her stay. Truth also alluded to her future plans, commenting that she would likely remain on the island throughout the winter while going out to visit the other camps nearby.

A second, longer letter written by Truth on 17 November also contains a few lines relating to her time on the island: “I went to Mason’s Island, and saw the freedmen there, and held several meetings, remained a week and was present at the celebration of the emancipation of the slaves of Maryland, and spoke on that occasion.”¹⁸⁰ While these short snippets of information are obviously too brief to produce a complete picture of Truth’s time on Mason’s Island, she appears

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ *First Annual Report*, 23.

¹⁷⁷ Nell Irvin Painter, *Sojourner Truth: A Life, a Symbol* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1996), 210.

¹⁷⁸ *Chicago Daily Inter-Ocean*, 13 August 1879, quoted in Nell Irvin Painter, “A Memorial Chapter,” in *Narrative of the Life of Sojourner Truth: A Bondswoman of Olden Time, with a History of Her Labors and Correspondence Drawn from Her Book of Life*, 1884 ed., by Olive Gilbert (New York: Penguin Books, 1998), 237.

¹⁷⁹ Sojourner Truth to Amy Post, Mason’s Island, Virginia, 3 November 1864, quoted in Dorothy Sterling, *We Are Your Sisters: Black Women in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1997), 253-54.

¹⁸⁰ The emancipation of slaves in Maryland occurred on 1 November 1864.

to have filled the role of inspirational leader, meeting with the freedmen, giving speeches, and in general providing encouragement to the refugees. A former slave herself, she had grown into an accomplished orator and national icon, and was therefore in an ideal position from which to encourage others during their difficult transition into freedom. Despite her earlier intention to continue on at the island, she accepted a commission issued her on 1 December 1864 by the National Freedmen's Relief Association of New York to serve as their counselor at Freedmen's Village. The following year, she served in a similar position at the District of Columbia's Freedmen's Hospital, the only major medical facility serving the city's black population.¹⁸¹ Finally, Truth led a campaign to enforce the 1865 law mandating desegregation of the Washington streetcar system, routinely running down and forcing herself aboard cars that refused to stop for her. On one occasion a conductor tried to eject her after she had successfully climbed aboard, and displaced her shoulder in the attempt. The Federal government furnished Truth with a lawyer, the conductor was fired, and soon thereafter she remarked that the "inside of the cars looked like pepper and salt."¹⁸²

After only a few months, Mason's Island bore little resemblance to the squalid refugee camp of the previous summer. The munificent work of the Association of Friends provided for the freedmen's physical, educational, and spiritual needs, and Sojourner Truth had offered a welcome source of encouragement. Even the Federal government, which initially offered little more than excuses and apologies, now supplied food, clothing, and some basic supplies. There was, however, another, much more controversial aspect to this remarkable turnaround. After being placed in charge of all Washington-area freedmen in early August 1864, Captain Brown began an aggressive policy of hiring out adults and apprenticing minors designed to substantially reduce the number of former slaves supported by the government.¹⁸³ Seeking to send "as many as possible" freedmen to the north, he worked with the Association of Friends and other benevolent societies to secure their transportation, employment, and lodging.¹⁸⁴ In pursuing this objective, Brown was not especially selective regarding the circumstances by which freedmen departed the camps. Lieutenant Knox was particularly critical of Brown's standing policy of allowing freedmen to leave Mason's Island whenever their friends applied for them, arguing they should only be allowed to depart after Superintendent Nichols was satisfied that they could support themselves and not become a public burden. As Knox disdainfully noted, Brown's goal appeared "to be to get rid of these people in *any* way; often by throwing them upon the community at large."¹⁸⁵ Moreover, Brown afforded the freedmen little choice regarding where they were sent, to whom they were hired out, and the type of work that they were expected to perform. Healthy adults were strongly encouraged, if not forced, to accept employment when it was offered them. Brown swiftly and severely dealt with any apparent disobedience, on one occasion instructing a camp superintendent to imprison several uncooperative laborers in the

¹⁸¹ Painter, *Sojourner Truth: A Life, a Symbol*, 214-15.

¹⁸² Gilbert, 126.

¹⁸³ Berlin et al., 260.

¹⁸⁴ Capt. J. M. Brown to Lt. Col. J. H. Taylor, Washington, D.C., 6 December 1864, Letters Received, RG 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., quoted in Berlin et al., 525-26.

¹⁸⁵ 1st Lt. Kilburn Knox to Col. James A. Hardie, Washington, D.C., 18 October 1864, Letters Received, ser. 15, RG 159: Records of the Office of the Inspector General, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., quoted in Berlin et al., 351-52 n.

guard house on a diet of bread and water, and informing him that “you, not they will decide when they are to work and when not.”¹⁸⁶

Family members were often separated as healthy freedmen, especially strong males, departed, but the young, aged, and infirm remained behind. As an employment depot, this situation was particularly prevalent on Mason’s Island. Of the 1,182 freedmen present on 26 July 1864, the camp housed 149 men, 418 women, and 615 children.¹⁸⁷ While the overall camp population had been reduced to nearly one-quarter this size by 13 October, the demographics remained strikingly similar. Of the 410 resident freedmen, there were forty-one men, 160 women, and 209 children (106 boys and 103 girls).¹⁸⁸ Moreover, the practice of apprenticing children without their parents’ consent was rampant and widespread throughout the camp system. The former slaves railed that depriving them of their autonomy, or that of their children, completely contradicted emancipation, but the Lincoln administration was fearful of undermining a small but growing antislavery sentiment in the south and so did not generally interfere.¹⁸⁹ On 5 November 1864, while visiting Camp Wadsworth, another Washington-area camp located near Langley, Virginia, Helen G. Longstreth noted with dismay that the “present policy of the Government is to find homes for all children of suitable age to bind out,” and that in order to prevent being separated from their children, many parents simply took them and fled the camps.¹⁹⁰ So many children departed Camp Wadsworth in this way that enrollment at the camp’s schools plummeted and the Friends transferred one of the teachers, Lydia T. Atkinson, to Mason’s Island, “where our school has been so greatly increased.”¹⁹¹ While Mason’s Island did house a disproportionately large number of children, apprenticeships occurred there too. However, with their parents hired off at a greater rate and the Potomac River functioning as a formidable barrier, families could not even flee the camp to avoid being separated.

This division of family members was emotionally traumatic, but as the case of nine-year-old Carter Holmes shows, it could also prove extremely dangerous. Holmes had been on Mason’s Island during the summer of 1864 before being apprenticed to a Maryland farmer who had agreed to provide the boy with food, clothing, and schooling in exchange for his labor. Instead, Holmes endured three years of abuse before fleeing to Washington to seek the aid of the government. In a letter dictated by Holmes on 22 April 1867, he explained that not only did his new master refuse to clothe or send him to school, but on several occasions whipped him without justification. Moreover, the farmer’s wife had once hit him on the head with a shovel when he could not fix a pot on a cook stove to her satisfaction. Holmes pleaded to be reunited with his mother and father, whom he thought were in the city, but was instead placed in an orphanage.¹⁹² Given the climate of the time, there were almost certainly other freedmen departing Mason’s

¹⁸⁶ E. A. Holman to O. G. Besley, 10 December 1864, vol. 66, p. 88, Press Copies of Letters Sent, Requisitions, & Receipts, ser. 528, Asst. Quartermaster & Disbursing Officer, D.C. Asst. Comr., RG 105: Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., quoted in Berlin et al., 261.

¹⁸⁷ Luddington and Compton to Hardie, quoted in Berlin et al., 339.

¹⁸⁸ Knox to Hardie, 13 October 1864, quoted in Berlin et al., 350.

¹⁸⁹ Berlin et al., 496-97.

¹⁹⁰ Longstreth to Education Committee.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Berlin et al., 347

Island who, like Holmes, were later deprived of just compensation or mentally or physically abused. Designed to remove the maximum number of freedmen from government care, Brown's policies imposed little scrutiny on prospective employers, and no oversight at all after the hiring occurred. In the south, newly freed blacks occupied much the same position in society as they had as slaves, and many whites drew little distinction between the two. Even in the north, racial equality was the exception rather than the norm, and racially motivated violence was not uncommon, especially where African Americans began outcompeting poor whites for available jobs.

Captain Brown faced a prodigious challenge in managing the Washington-area freedmen's camps. To his credit, he inherited a deplorable situation on Mason's Island, and although never an ideal site, the living conditions quickly and dramatically improved under his tenure. Moreover, Brown's regimen appears tame when compared with other proposals for running the camps. Majors Luddington and Compton went so far as to recommend that all African American men at least fifteen years of age be hired by the government and sent either to serve in the military or enroll in civil employment. Any women, they believed, who could not find immediate employment around Washington should be sent to any part of the country where their labor was in high demand, taking along their children under four years of age. Any children from four to fourteen years of age were to remain in Washington to be educated.¹⁹³ While families were inevitably broken up under Brown's system, this was not an absolute certainty in every case, and the sheer number of freedmen fleeing the South necessitated that the Federal government take decisive action in finding them private employment. Conversely, had a more severe policy been adopted in line with the recommendations made by Luddington and Compton, family members would have been systematically separated as a matter of procedure.

Ethical considerations aside, Captain Brown realized that until the population on Mason's Island was reduced to a manageable size, conditions there would not improve. Given its role as an employment depot, hiring out the freedmen was the most reasonable and effective method of bringing about this decrease. Whereas on 26 July 1864, the camp housed 1182 residents, this number had already been reduced to about 800 by August and further reduced to 500 by the end of September.¹⁹⁴ As discussed above, by the time Lieutenant Knox arrived on the island on 13 October, the entire population numbered only 410. As the number of deaths occurring on the island steadily decreased during this period (118 in August, sixty in September, and eleven thus far in October), they accounted for a progressively small percentage of the overall population decline. Conversely, the number of freedmen hired out remained proportionately high, with 222 departing in August, 177 in September, and forty-eight in the first two weeks of October.¹⁹⁵ This wholesale reduction in the camp's population likely proved at least as important in improving the physical conditions on Mason's Island as the charitable assistance given by the Association of Friends. At a population of near 1,200, the Friends could really only hope to keep the freedmen alive. As that number decreased, however, they were able to make the camp a much more hospitable place for those residents who remained.

¹⁹³ Luddington and Compton to Hardie, quoted in Berlin et al., 343-44.

¹⁹⁴ Knox to Hardie, 13 October 1864, quoted in Berlin et al., 350.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

At the beginning of the year 1865, the camp population had been reduced to nearly one-quarter its original size, and its residents enjoyed a significantly better quality of life than those who had preceded them a few month before. The Association of Friends recognized that while feeding and clothing the freedmen was the necessary first step in their transition from slaves to functional, self-supportive members of society, such a transformation would largely hinge on their access to a basic education and training in a trade. Without the knowledge and skills necessary to advance their place in society, the freedmen would remain at the mercy of their former masters. Consequently, throughout 1865 the Friends directed their efforts almost exclusively to the establishment and support of schools.¹⁹⁶ Due to the large number of children on Mason's Island, the Friends stationed three teachers there, Lydia T. Atkinson (who had recently departed Camp Wadsworth), Sarah A. Cadwallader, and Sarah E. Lobb. The industrial school was well-supplied by a package sent from the Friends on 4 January containing five pounds of woolen knitting yarn, shoemaker's tools, lasts,¹⁹⁷ and "one lot of sole leather."¹⁹⁸ Over the next six months, the women and girls sewed many garments and also made bed ticks for use in the hospital.¹⁹⁹ The men and boys were trained in cobbling²⁰⁰ and mat-making, the latter under the instruction of a workman known as "Uncle Cain."²⁰¹

Despite the continued success of both schools, the Friends became concerned early in the year over a renewed unhealthiness about the camp. In March they dispatched two members to investigate the matter and inquire into the possibility of removing the population to another location. Upon their return to Philadelphia, they reported that the sickness had substantially decreased, but there was also a high likelihood of closing the camp in the near future.²⁰² A complete record of deaths at Mason's Island exists for the period February-June 1865, and these records bear out the unhealthy state of the camp as alluded to by the Friends.²⁰³ The reports for

¹⁹⁶ "Extracts from Second Annual Report."

¹⁹⁷ Lasts are shoemaker's tools, usually carved from wood, that serve as working molds, over which the shoes are made.

¹⁹⁸ *First Annual Report*, 23.

¹⁹⁹ Bed ticks were simple, sturdy fabric bags filled with straw, leaves, or other readily available materials. A bed tick could be laid on a cot or bed frame to serve as a mattress, or used as rudimentary bed on its own. Although the industrial school produced these particular bed ticks for use in the hospital, they would have been the logical choice for all freedmen on Mason's Island due to their low cost and relative ease of construction.

²⁰⁰ Although it is not known how many pairs of new shoes were made at the industrial school, the ca. May 1866 "Extracts from Second Annual Report" notes that the freedmen repaired fifty-two pairs.

²⁰¹ Teacher on Mason's Island to Association of Friends for the Aid and Elevation of the Freedmen, 23 November 1864, quoted in *First Annual Report*, 14-15.; "Extracts from Second Annual Report," ca. May 1866. "Uncle Cain," was most likely a former slave, as male and female freedmen were often referred to as Uncle and Aunt, a custom carried over from slavery. Although in many instances these names were used with genuine affection, they were still largely pejorative terms. During Truth's meeting with Abraham Lincoln the president addressed his signature in her autograph book to "Aunt Sojourner Truth." Truth held a deep respect for Lincoln and particularly prized his notation, but her friend and fellow activist Lucy N. Coleman took great offense over Lincoln's use of what she considered a derogatory term. See Suzanne Pullon Fitch and Roseann M. Mandziuk, *Sojourner Truth as Orator: Wit, Story, and Song* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1997), 24.

²⁰² "Extracts from Second Annual Report."

²⁰³ The register records each death in chronological order with every entry listing the name of the deceased, age in years and months, cause of death, size of coffin in feet and inches, and place of death: barracks, hospital, or asylum (presumably the building marked "lunatic patients and attendant" on the ca. 1864 camp map). See "Register of Deaths of Contrabands at Mason's Island, VA, February-June 1865," *National Archives Microfilm M1902: Records*

February and March record forty and thirty-four deaths respectively, attributed to the following causes: bronchitis, cholera, consumption, convulsing, cough with and without fever, diarrhea, dropsy, frostbite, inflammation of the lungs, measles, peritonitis, pleurisy, pneumonia, retention, typhoid fever, whooping cough, and unknown causes. Although some of the causes of death may be related, for instance diarrhea and pneumonia can arise from complications with the measles, this many different diseases probably did not arise through an original, common vector. However, the cold winter weather may have played a significant role, since as the Friends reported, the death rate dropped off sharply in April and two-thirds of the deaths that occurred during February and March took place in the unheated barracks.²⁰⁴ The fact that only nineteen people died in the hospital during these two months implies two possible scenarios: that the large facility was actually filled to capacity and fewer people died there because they received adequate medical treatment, or that the hospital was no longer capable of adequately serving the camp population and residents were forced to remain in the barracks and fend for themselves.

Following Confederate General Robert E. Lee's surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia to Union Lieutenant-General Ulysses S. Grant on 9 April 1864, the Civil War quickly wound down and large numbers of Federal troops began returning to Washington, D.C., to take part in the Grand Review of the Armies, held 23-24 May 1865. After passing in review, it was planned that many of the soldiers would return to the south bank of the Potomac and exit the city by way of the Aqueduct Bridge (HABS DC-166).²⁰⁵ However, Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs wrote Grant on 18 May expressing concern over the bridge's narrowness and its ability to withstand such a heavy load. As an alternative, Meigs proposed that a temporary pontoon bridge be built across the river from Georgetown to the northern end of Mason's Island to facilitate the departing soldiers, who could then proceed across the extant Mason's causeway to Virginia. The matter was referred to military engineer Lt. Colonel B. S. Alexander, who issued a response on 20 May 1865. In it he stated that, although he considered the Aqueduct Bridge strong enough to carry over "a drove of elephants," the pontoon bridge ought to be built in order to alleviate congestion on the narrow bridge. According to Alexander, both routes were to be used, with one column going over the Aqueduct Bridge and a second crossing at Mason's Island.²⁰⁶ This pontoon bridge (Figure 9) was constructed soon thereafter, and likely disassembled shortly after the Grand Review, probably by the beginning of June.

What little is known about the Mason's Island freedmen's camp during the spring and early summer of 1865 shows that preparations were underway for its impending closure. In May, teacher Sarah E. Lobb was released from service and her position on Mason's Island was not filled.²⁰⁷ A document released at the end of the month recorded that 523 freedmen were currently in residence and that the hospital employed two surgeons, one ward master, one matron, and

of the Field Offices for the District of Columbia, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1870, roll 19, slides 781-84, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

²⁰⁴ Fifteen deaths were recorded in April, eighteen in May, and only three in June, although this last number almost certainly reflects the relocation of the residents in preparation of closing the camp by the end of the month. See "Register of Deaths of Contrabands at Mason's Island, Virginia, February-June 1865."

²⁰⁵ The Aqueduct Bridge was constructed 1833-44, and connected Georgetown with Alexandria, Virginia.

²⁰⁶ U.S. War Dept., *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, ser. 1, vol. 46 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1895), 1169-70.

²⁰⁷ "Extracts from Second Annual Report."

twelve attendants.²⁰⁸ More importantly, it stipulated that the entire population could be accommodated at Freedman's Village and all camp services taken over there at a savings of \$1,000 per month.²⁰⁹ Although no records are known to have survived, it appears that preparations for closing the camp and relocating the residents began around this time. Louisa J. Roberts made her final trip to the island on 24 June. Accompanied by J. M. Ellis, Roberts took possession of all property belonging to the Association of Friends, including the hospital furniture, bedding, and clothing, and arranged for the release of the remaining teachers. She also met with the freedmen for the last time, and counseled them on their future prospects. Ellis took occasion to note the "deep and abiding interest" she had always taken in their welfare.²¹⁰ Additionally, a wedding was to be held between two freedmen at the Friends' school room, and Ellis provided the following description of the bride, groom, and attendees.

*There sat the happy couple, the groom (apparently nearly old enough to be the father of the bride), dressed in his best, not forgetting a pair of "bran new" white cotton gloves, and, from the way he handled them, evidently not knowing what to do with his fingers, they being subjected to a kind of imprisonment to which they had, doubtless, heretofore been strangers. The bride was dressed in white, and averted her head with as much apparent becoming modesty as could well have been assumed by any white person occupying the same position. Most of the company were becomingly dressed, the women and girls wearing the fashionable jockey cap; the best feature of the whole of which was, that they had earned, and paid for them themselves.*²¹¹

Unfortunately, the minister had been mistakenly sent to Freedman's Village and the ceremony had to be postponed. However, the company gratified the Friends by performing several hymns, described by Ellis as a "wild kind of chaunt, to which, as they were all standing, they beat time with their feet, the females swinging their bodies to and fro, their motions increasing in rapidity as the excitement progressed."²¹² Although written in a somewhat condescending manner, Ellis' account provides the only example of a social situation taking place between the freedmen on the island, and also illustrates the relatively high level of prosperity that they had achieved, largely through the assistance of the Association of Friends.

Mason's Island was officially returned to William A. Bradley on 29 June 1865, with any remaining freedmen presumably removed to Freedman's Village before this time.²¹³ All buildings constructed on the island in conjunction with the military occupancy and subsequent

²⁰⁸ Untitled document, 31 May 1865, *National Archives Microfilm M1055: Records of the Assistant Commissioner for the District of Columbia, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands: 1865-1869*, roll 21, slides 641-43, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ J. M. Ellis, "A Visit to the Freedmen - No. I," *Friends' Intelligencer*, 15 July 1865.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Netherton, "Delicate Beauty," 45.

freedman's camp are also believed to have been turned over to Bradley. However, to what use he put these structures, if any, is unknown.²¹⁴

e. Absentee Ownership and Ephemeral Use: 1865-1899

Upon the island's return to Bradley, he argued with the Federal government for back rent payments and damages. He had legitimate grievances. The Federal appropriation of the island had not only seriously altered its previous arrangement through the construction of the buildings, but after four years of continuous occupation by thousands of people the landscape itself was almost certainly far worse for the experience. The soldiers had also dismantled some of Mason's retaining walls, using the stone to construct boat landings. Moreover, Bradley's previous tenant, Jacob Powers, lost his lease to the island in the spring of 1863 because he could not pay the rent, and Bradley bought back the unused portion of his five-year lease. Powers had been depending on earning revenue through his management of the property as a resort area and commercial garden. The Army's sheer presence most likely prevented the former use, and cattle brought to the island ate Powers' crops or otherwise destroyed them. No available documentation indicates that Bradley ever received compensation.²¹⁵

Apparently unable to re-rent the island on a long-term basis, Bradley instead began a decades-long practice of letting it out for short-term recreational activities. In August 1865, the Franklin Steam Fire Engine Company held a picnic on its grounds featuring a fine brass and string band.²¹⁶ In that same year, "the Game of the Tournament," a medieval-style jousting competition, was held on a clearing on the northern part of the island, likely the current site of the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial. Spectators filled a large grandstand, perched atop carriages, or watched from the grass as knights representing different regions competed against one another. There was no combat; instead riders on horseback speared small rings, vying for the honor of selecting the Queen of Love and Beauty and her maids of honor. With the Queen and her court crowned by the champions, the entourage, with the spectators in tow, proceeded down Mason's allee to the mansion, where the throne was located. One by one the knights were formally introduced to the Queen, ending the night's chivalry pageant. A moonlit dance followed (Figure 13).²¹⁷

The fun on Analostan Island was not reserved only for the young. On 7 December 1865, William Bradley co-founded the Association of the Oldest Inhabitants of Washington, D.C., and served as the organization's first vice president. On 3 October 1866, about sixty-five of his fellow members joined him on the island for a club meeting, feast, dance, and athletic competition. Members participated in a game of leapfrog, footraces, high jumping, and other events, with

²¹⁴ Upon Bradley's death in 1867 his estate contained several bills, including some for lumber and shingles, indicating that he continued construction activities on the island. This work may have involved one or more of the extant Civil War-era structures. See Curry, 26.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 47.

²¹⁷ Ibid., 42; "A Tournament on the Potomac," *Harper's Weekly*, 7 October 1865.

Bradley, aged seventy-two, and Mr. Noble Hurdle, possibly a fictitious name, aged eighty-five, among the winners.²¹⁸

Bradley retained ownership of the island until his death in 1867. He left a short will, directing his trustees to divide his estate, which included the island, “into four parts, one for his son William A. Bradley, Jr., the second part to the children of the latter, and one part to each of the testator’s daughters, Jeanette H. Linton and Sidney T. Edelin.”²¹⁹ The will also held that should the daughters die without children of their own, their shares should divest to the children of William A. Bradley, Jr. Linton and Edelin did indeed die without children, and Bradley, Jr. died in 1869, whose will stipulated that his widow, Elizabeth, inherit and hold his quarter-share of the island until her death or remarriage. She remarried sometime prior to May 1878,²²⁰ and her holding devolved on Powell M. Bradley, Frederick W. Bradley, and Maria G. Bradley, later Dewey by marriage, the three living grandchildren at the time of their mother’s remarriage.²²¹ They held joint title to island and much of the original Bradley estate by virtue of common inheritance from their grandfather, father, and two aunts.

Very little is known regarding the island’s use for nearly twenty years after the death of William A. Bradley in 1867. An 1896 *Washington Post* article briefly recounts that “it was known as ‘Robey’s Resort,’ which was a small-sized Eldorado,” and “became the haunt of disreputable characters.” This “resort” was apparently present on the island illegally, as the Bradley heirs “refused to lease it to the proprietor,” presumably due to its sordid reputation.²²² An 1890 magazine article gives a similar account, stating that “the island fell into disrepute and was the resort of negro roughs and gamblers.”²²³ Given its recent use as a freedmen’s camp, and its proximity to the Freedman’s Village at Arlington House, it is reasonable to believe that former slaves might have returned and adopted the island as a rendezvous spot, or even squatted there. Regardless of the composition of the regulars at “Robey’s Resort,” the island appears to have been a rough, relatively lawless place that attracted members of society’s fringe. On 30 January 1883, some seventy-five to 100 spectators, “mostly idlers and loungers of Foggy Bottom,” witnessed a three-round “prize fight” after one competitor accused the other of stealing his overcoat. Ben J. Williams, weighing 133 ½ pounds, defeated the much heavier 170-pound George Kessler when the latter “was disabled by striking Williams a powerful blow on the shoulder and putting three of his fingers out of joint.”²²⁴

²¹⁸ Netherton, “Delicate Beauty,” 47; John Claggett Proctor, “Gay Times on Analostan,” *Washington Star*, 23 March 1947.

²¹⁹ “Receiver for Island: Trustees Seek to Foreclose on Analostan Property,” *Washington Post*, 22 November 1899.

²²⁰ On 2 May 1878, Bradley’s widow, recorded as E. W. Wolcott, sold a different Washington property to her son Powell Bradley. See “Real Estate Transfers,” *Washington Post*, 3 May 1878.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² “On Analostan Island: Proposed Location of Contagious Diseases Hospital,” *Washington Post*, 10 February 1896.

²²³ Herbert Janvrin Browne, “Athletics in Washington,” *Outing, an Illustrated Monthly Magazine of Recreation* 17, no. 1 (October 1917): 71.

²²⁴ John Claggett Proctor, “A History of Analostan Island, Theodore Roosevelt Memorial,” ca. 1931.

This unauthorized use of the island was most likely encouraged by its increasing physical isolation. Mason's Ferry ceased operations in 1867, the year William A. Bradley died.²²⁵ The causeway remained but was seriously damaged by a freshet in 1877, "and little seems to have been done to repair the damage." While portions of the span remained intact, and it was still possible to carefully walk over to the island, the damage was severe enough that thousands of dollars would have been required to repair or rebuild the causeway. These funds were not allocated, and the causeway remained in disrepair.²²⁶

During this time the island is also reported to have been used for legitimate business activities, being rented out for agricultural purposes and then to the Great Falls Ice Company. The company, which purportedly "used to cut ice in Little River," is said to have built icehouses on the property, with the remnants still discernable in March 1921.²²⁷ Precisely when these activities took place, and their locations on the island, remain unknown.

Circa 1879, Max Weyl completed a painting of the historic Mason ferry house (Figure 14). Although the pastoral scene was most likely not intended to be a direct representation of the building's appearance, it seems in reasonably sound condition. Conversely, what little of the island's landscape is visible is unkempt and overgrown, with heavy brush growing around the ferry house. The scene supports the general assessment that during this time Analostan Island was not well-maintained and not in regular use. Weyl, a disciple of the Hudson River School tradition, became famous in Washington for his scenes of pictorial local landscapes, and the island was therefore an obvious choice. This painting was also likely among the artist's first professional works, as Weyl had only devoted himself to painting fulltime in 1878 and held his first public exhibition and sale in 1879.²²⁸

The Columbia Athletic Club leased the island from the Bradley family from August 1889-92, although members held events there at least as early as 1887, the year the club was founded.²²⁹ The monthly rent was \$83.33^{1/8}.²³⁰ During their brief tenure the Columbia Athletic Club operated a ferry between their boathouse at the foot of Thirty-Second Street in Georgetown and the

²²⁵ Fanning, 41.

²²⁶ Duhamel, 144. In 1878, District of Columbia Chief Engineer Hoxie estimated the cost of repairing the causeway at \$16,767.50 and \$40,926.01 to rebuild it altogether. Although the original deed between John Mason and the Georgetown corporation required "that it must be kept in repair," only minor stabilization efforts seem to have taken place, and the causeway abandoned. See "Suburban News: Annapolis, Alexandria and Georgetown Annals," *Washington Post*, 28 December 1877; "Rebuild or Repair? What is to be Done with the Analostan Causeway?" *Washington Post*, 1 February 1878.

²²⁷ Regarding agricultural use, see "Receiver for Island: Trustees Seek to Foreclose on Analostan Property." Regarding the Great Falls Ice Company, see Shannon, "The Rambler Writes of the Charm of Historic Old Analostan."

²²⁸ For more information on Max Weyl, see Andrew J. Cosentino and Henry H. Glassie, *The Capital Image: Painters in Washington, 1899-1915* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press for the National Museum of Art, 1983).

²²⁹ Regarding the lease, see Shannon, "The Rambler's Third Article on the Early History of Analostan Island." From 27-29 July 1887 the Columbia Athletic Club hosted the First Caledonian Games athletic competition on the island. See "The Columbia Athletic Club: Their First Caledonian Games Held Last Night," *Washington Post*, 28 July 1887; "The Athletic Games," *Washington Post*, 30 July 1887.

²³⁰ "Analostan Island Leased," *The Washington Post*, 20 August 1889.

island's northern shore, below which the Mason-era ferry house was "slowly crumbling."²³¹ The club also carried out the first building projects on the island since the Civil War, constructing a clubhouse, quarter-mile bicycle and running track, baseball field, tennis courts, grandstand, shooting ranges, and additional athletic grounds.²³² Most of these improvements were likely located on the island's north end, with a 200-yard rifle range laid off near the Mason mansion and "the trap shooters nestling from the sharp west winds further to the south." Owing to these extensive facilities, the island was a popular destination and often crowded. The *Washington Post* reported that "there is always a pleasant party on the island on Sundays," and also advertised upcoming athletic competitions.²³³ These competitions featured baseball and football games, tennis matches, track and field meets, sport shooting, and rowing.²³⁴ Most contests were local affairs, made up of regional athletes or played between the club's two squads, the Blues and the Reds. In 1890, however, the Columbia Athletic Club hosted the annual meet of the American Athletic Union, drawing competitors from around the country. A new world record in the 100-yard dash was set that day at a mark of nine and four-fifths seconds.²³⁵ The crouching start to races is also said to have been first used on the island.²³⁶ A young Theodore Roosevelt, then a civil service commissioner in the administration of President Benjamin Harrison, was a prominent member of the Club, and a vocal proponent of what he termed "the manly sports."²³⁷

The island clubhouse, described in the *Washington Post* as a picturesque, "pretty little house, surrounded by its wide verandas, and half-hidden in the fine old trees," burned to the ground on the night of 16 May 1891, leaving only its tin roof behind.²³⁸ The Columbia Athletic Club left the island just over a year later, following which the Analostan Boat Club is erroneously reported to have leased the island and built a boathouse there.²³⁹ Although several boat clubs, including the Analostan Boat Club, routinely used the island during regattas and other events, there is no evidence that any of them actually leased the site. The Analostan boathouse was definitely not located on the island, but rather across the river at the intersection of Twenty-seventh and F Streets and New Hampshire Avenue (near the current sites of the Kennedy Center and Watergate Hotel).²⁴⁰ However, in June 1889 a severe storm nearly sunk the floating boathouse of the Washington Canoe Association, which was moored off the island's shore. Members were forced to camp on the island as they battled the weather for two days before eventually saving the

²³¹ Browne, 71.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ "On Analostan Island: Colombia Club Members Crown Their Pleasant Resort," *Washington Post*, 30 September 1889.

²³⁴ "Athletics: The Columbia Club Issues a Programme of its Events," *Washington Post*, 9 September 1888; "The Football Season: It Opened Yesterday with a Match on Analostan Island," *Washington Post*, 26 October 1890.

²³⁵ Arnold, 27.

²³⁶ Fanning, 42.

²³⁷ "Mr. Roosevelt Opposes It: He Does Not Endorse the Action of the Columbia Club's Governors," *Washington Post*, 15 June 1890.

²³⁸ "Only the Tin Roof Left: Columbia Athletic Clubhouse on Analostan Island Burned," *Washington Post*, 17 May 1891.

²³⁹ Arnold, 27; Fanning, 42.

²⁴⁰ John J. Daly, "Boat Club Passing Recalls Happy Days on Potomac River," *Washington Post*, 22 May 1927.

structure.²⁴¹ The Analostan Gun Club, a hunting and sport shooting organization, was also based on the island.²⁴²

While the Bradleys did lease out the island and collect rent, this was not their primary means of earning money from the property. Rather, the three grandchildren repeatedly applied it as collateral against promissory notes. According to the *Washington Post*, this practice began in 1886, when “Powell M. Bradley conveyed the island by deed of trust to Reginald Fendall, trustee, to secure a note for \$3,500 in favor of William Coppinger and another note for \$2,000 in favor of Jane E. Brooke, payable in three years.” In 1887 Powell Bradley again “conveyed the tract of land to secure two notes for \$2,000 in favor of Blair Lee, payable in two years.” Also in 1887, the three owners together “conveyed the island . . . to Reginald Fendall, to be sold, the proceeds to go to the grantors and their heirs and assigns.”²⁴³ The island, however, was not sold, and in January 1889 Fendall transferred the property back to the Bradleys, but received it again one month later. In each of these two transfers the recipient(s) paid five dollars for the island.²⁴⁴ The real estate dealings were apparently carried out as a means of acquiring additional capital, as “Powell M. Bradley conveyed the property to Fendall on several subsequent occasions, bringing the total indebtedness of the island up to \$80,000.”²⁴⁵

Fendall later reported that in 1894 the Bradley heirs refused an offer of \$100,000 to sell the island.²⁴⁶ As its assessed value was only \$37,500, the decision not to sell the property was likely heavily influenced by the slight profit the sale would have garnered in light of such a large debt.²⁴⁷ Two years later, from February-May 1896, members of the Senate District Committee and District of Columbia commissioners explored the possibility of acquiring Analostan Island as the site of a contagious diseases hospital.²⁴⁸ A heated debate ensued, during which proponents argued that the island was an ideal site for such a hospital, as it would necessarily need to be established in an isolated location removed from the general public, while at the same time readily accessible in order to serve Washington-area residents.²⁴⁹ Opponents countered that the cost to purchase the island, build the hospital, and provide access would not be economically viable, that it would be impossible to secure a sufficient supply of potable water to meet the facility’s needs, and that the island’s marshes and swamps were unsanitary and incompatible

²⁴¹ “Canoeists with Pluck: How They Saved Their Boathouse from Destruction,” *Washington Post*, 9 June 1889.

²⁴² “Plan Coney Island Here: Syndicate to Make Analostan Island a Summer Resort,” *Washington Post*, 12 July 1907.

²⁴³ “Receiver for Island: Trustees Seek to Foreclose on Analostan Property.”

²⁴⁴ “Real Estate Transfers,” 3 May 1878; “Real Estate Transfers,” *Washington Post*, 24 January 1879.

²⁴⁵ “Receiver for Island: Trustees Seek to Foreclose on Analostan Property.”

²⁴⁶ “On Analostan Island: Proposed Location of Contagious Diseases Hospital.”

²⁴⁷ “Not a Suitable Site: Analostan Island Would Cost More than the Contagious Hospital,” *Washington Post*, 4 March 1896.

²⁴⁸ Following four months of negotiations, acquisition of the island was defeated when the Senate voted to exclude the proposition from the District Appropriation Bill on 19 May 1896. See “Passed in Five Hours: Senate Agrees to District Appropriation Bill,” *Washington Post*, 20 May 1896.

²⁴⁹ “The Uses of Analostan,” *Washington Post*, 25 March 1896.

with a hospital site.²⁵⁰ The issue ended when, not surprisingly, the Bradley heirs refused the government's offer of \$75,000, and the Senate did not increase the bid.²⁵¹

Following the unsuccessful bid for an isolation hospital, the island briefly became an explosives test range during the Spanish-American War. In early May 1898, Professors Wirt Tassin, of the National Museum, and Charles Monroe, of Columbia University, received permission from the island's owners and the District commissioners to carry out tests of high explosives.²⁵² The fact that the pair received authorization strongly implies that the island was not occupied, rented, or otherwise in regular use at this time. It did, however, remain in informal use. As the *Washington Post* reported, "while roaming about the island Monday evening several persons found the explosives in a mysterious-looking box labeled 'dynamite torpedo, Engineer Corps, D.C., dangerous.'" Police officers sent out to investigate the report said "they found the explosives as described near the ruins of the old Analostan mansion, and brought them to the station," where Monroe picked up the torpedo and returned it to the island.²⁵³ He explained that a public notice had not been given because the tests were intended only for the education of a select group of qualified civilians and military personnel. The following month Monroe confirmed that these tests had been carried out, unapologetically stating that "during the last few weeks Washington people have been frequently alarmed by loud and repeated explosions which the timid were inclined to attribute to a bombardment by Spanish warships coming up the Potomac."²⁵⁴ He went on to describe a particular military exercise developed by his colleague during these tests.

Mr. Tassin has already invented a method of throwing up rifle pits, which is likely to be of great value during operations in Cuba. His idea is that a squad of sappers shall take a number of 'jovite'²⁵⁵ cartridges and rush forward with them, making holes in the ground with their bayonets, and planting the cartridges in them. A single man can fire a whole line of these cartridges, and run back in time to get out of danger. Of course, a series of explosions ensue, and the result is the excavation of a deep ditch which served admirably as a line of rifle pits. In this manner rifle pits can be excavated at a moment's notice, instead of requiring the exposure of a considerable number of men during a period of digging. We have tried this process on Analostan Island with remarkable success.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁰ "Against Analostan Island," *Washington Post*, 22 February 1896.

²⁵¹ "May Raise the Offer \$25,000: Analostan Island Desired for Objectionable Institutions," *Washington Post*, 1 May 1896; "Passed In Five Hours."

²⁵² "Box Labeled Dynamite: Owner Found for Explosives Found on Analostan Island," *Washington Post*, 11 May 1898; "Prof. Monroe's Dynamite: Used on Analostan Island to Instruct Army and Navy Men," *Washington Post*, 12 May 1898.

²⁵³ "Box Labeled Dynamite."

²⁵⁴ Rene Bache, "She Is a Death Ship: Vesuvius Bids Fair to Revolutionize Warfare," *Washington Post*, 26 June 1898.

²⁵⁵ Jovite is a class of high explosive invented in 1892 by J. E. Blomer that was explored as a safer alternative to gunpowder, which was often dangerous to its handlers as well as its intended target. For general information on jovite, see Marcus Benjamin, "Explosives" in *Appleton's Annual Cyclopaedia and Register of Important Events of the Year 1900* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1901), 196. For information regarding the military use of jovite in the late nineteenth century, see Blache, "She Is a Death Ship."

²⁵⁶ Bache, "She Is a Death Ship."

Further, while Monroe did not specifically mention employing the mansion as a target, he did describe a “demolition experiment” in which he fashioned timber rafts, loaded them with jovite, “and blew them up,” as well as practicing “several other such methods for destroying bridges, railroads, and aqueducts.”²⁵⁷ The Mason mansion would have made an acceptable stand-in for this infrastructure. With explosives planted nearby, it would have likely sustained at least collateral damage from the detonations. Visual evidence supports this contention. A ca. 1880-90 photograph of the mansion’s north elevation (Figure 15) shows the house in reasonably good repair, missing its pedimented entrance, door, and window lights, but with the exterior walls completely intact, including the impost block, round arches, and recessed panels of the west pavilion. The west façade, visible at an extreme angle, is also in sound condition. Most importantly, the main block’s gabled roof, the only portion of the roof visible in the photograph, appears intact and free of obvious holes or other damage. This image contrasts sharply with two photographs of the Mason mansion taken ca. 1905 (Figures 16 and 17), by which time the mansion had been reduced to ruins, just as the *Washington Post* had reported seven years previously. The entire roof is absent and the central entrance bay of the main block has decayed down to the level of the raised basement. Even more notable is the near total lack of any remnants of the south wall of the main block above basement level. While water infiltration can quickly bring about major damage to structures, given the relatively short span of time and apparently stable condition of the mansion prior to the explosives testing, this progression seems too excessive to solely attribute to water action as the catalyst of decay. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the tests at least contributed to the mansion’s striking decline.

The three Bradley heirs appeared in District of Columbia Court at the close of the nineteenth century, as on 20 November 1899 attorneys C. A. Brandenburg and W. Mosby Williams entered a suit in equity seeking to foreclose on the island due to the outstanding \$80,000 debt.²⁵⁸ Along with Powell M. Bradley, Frederick W. Bradley, and Maria G. Dewey, the suit named seventeen additional defendants, each of whom held a financial interest in the island stemming from the numerous notes held against the Bradleys.²⁵⁹ According to the terms of the petition, the complainants asked for a sale of the property, with the proceeds applied to the payment of the debt. On 18 October 1900, Justice Job Barnard of the District Supreme Court ruled in favor of the complainants and decreed that unless a “certain indebtedness” was paid on or before 1 August 1901, Blair Lee and John D. Coughlan, two of the defendants named in the suit, were to be appointed trustees and instructed to sell the island.²⁶⁰ The Bradleys made no such payment, but owing to several delays, the sale was not completed for another nine years.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ In contrast to a lawsuit, which petitions the court for redress of a grievance, usually through a monetary award, a suit filed in equity essentially asks the judge to undertake an action, in this case the foreclosure and sale of Analostan Island.

²⁵⁹ “Receiver for Island: Trustees Seek to Foreclose on Analostan Property.”

²⁶⁰ “Analostan Island May Be Sold: Court Allows Thirty Days in Which to Pay a Mortgage,” *Washington Post*, 19 October 1900.

f. Stalled Development: 1900-1931

By the early twentieth century, Analostan Island was ragged, overgrown, and largely forgotten; a very different place than that of its heyday during the first half of the nineteenth century. Its once celebrated landscape was largely abandoned and unused, with the possible exception of one Mr. Charles Burroughs, a reputed “man of parts” and “notorious river character” who was said to have occupied “one of the still habitable slave quarters” ca. 1900.²⁶¹ This isolation afforded Professor Samuel Pierpont Langley, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, an ideal location to conduct field tests in the nascent fields of aerodynamics and aeronautics.²⁶² On 10 March 1902, Langley was joined on Analostan Island by Alexander Graham Bell, who had been conducting experiments of his own since the 1890s. The pair attempted to fly a large, nearly 90” diameter hexagonal kite in order to test a method of obtaining automatic control of equilibrium while airborne. A lack of wind, however, prevented Langley and Bell from getting the kite aloft.²⁶³ Although this is the only test known to have taken place on the island itself, Langley conducted numerous other experiments from boats on the Potomac River, and may have come ashore as well.²⁶⁴

That same year, the *Washington Times* reported, “the interior aspect of Analostan Island is desolate in the extreme,” with the ruins of the Mason mansion obscured by a thick stand of young trees.”²⁶⁵ Seven years later the *Washington Post* repeated this account, recording a “scene of dismal devastation” around the mansion site.²⁶⁶ With the Mason mansion in ruins, the human presence all but gone, and vegetation growing unchecked, the island was once again a wild place. However, at the same time new development schemes also emerged, beginning with the Federal government revisiting the possibility of acquiring Analostan Island as the site of an isolation hospital.²⁶⁷

Again the plan failed. In April 1902, the District commissioners made an unfavorable report on the acquisition to Senator James McMillan, chairman of the Senate Committee on the District of Columbia. The commissioners, however, submitted “that it might be advisable for the United

²⁶¹ Arnold, 27.

²⁶² Langley’s long and brilliant career also spanned architecture, astronomy, astrophysics, and included the creation of four American time zones (1883), as well as the establishment of the Smithsonian Astronomical Observatory in Cambridge, Mass., (1890) and Washington’s National Zoological Park (1890). See Glenn A. Walsh, *Langley, Samuel Pierpont*, (Glenn A. Walsh, 2001), <http://johnbrashear.tripod.com/bio/LangleySP.htm> (accessed 20 November 2007).

²⁶³ Alexander Graham Bell, journal entry, 10 March 1902, in *The Alexander Graham Bell Family Papers at the Library of Congress, 1862-1939* [online version]: 631-34, Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, 29 September 2000, <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/bellhtml/bellhome.html> (accessed 20 November 2007).

²⁶⁴ In 1896, he succeeded in launching two of his model “aerodromes” for flights of 3,000 feet and 4,200 feet, the first sustained free flights of power-propelled heavier-than-air machines. Langley’s ultimate goal was that of the first controlled, powered, and sustained heavier-than-air human flight, and was devastated when the Wright Brothers became the first to accomplish the feat on 17 December 1903. See Walsh, “Langley, Samuel Pierpont.”

²⁶⁵ “Analostan Island, the Site of Old Mansion, Again Attracts Public Attention,” *Washington Times*, ca. 4 May 1902.

²⁶⁶ “Island Famous Once,” *Washington Post*, 11 August 1907.

²⁶⁷ “Island for Hospital: Purchase of Analostan Property Is Proposed,” *Washington Times*, 20 April 1902.

States government to obtain control of the island in connection with the system of improvements in the District projected by the park commission.”²⁶⁸ Later that year the McMillan Commission submitted its recommendations on improving Washington’s park system to Congress. The report stipulated that “the island should not be permitted to come into disagreeable occupancy, but at the earliest convenient opportunity it should be purchased and developed as a river park for the use of that portion of Georgetown which is now entirely without park facilities.” Concurrently, the first plan for the Arlington Memorial Bridge directed that the span connect the proposed Lincoln Memorial with Arlington House, by way of the island, and that a “concourse suited to memorial treatment” be erected across the Little River from the island to the Virginia shore.²⁶⁹

Despite these proposals, the government did not purchase or foreclose on the island, leaving it open to private developers. A variety of potential projects emerged over the next few years, including the construction of apartment houses, a university stadium, and even a tourist attraction named the “Palace of Progress” that was designed for the display and sale of merchandise from throughout the country.²⁷⁰ The most notable scheme centered on developing the island as an amusement park. In July 1907, the *Washington Post* reported that a New York syndicate had purchased the island for \$100,000 with plans to invest a further \$500,000 in renovating it as a “summer resort, after the style of New York’s Coney Island.”²⁷¹ The promoters sought to integrate the island’s natural features and topography with the planned development. This scheme featured about twenty acres taken up by roller coasters, a large carousel, midway, and facilities for dancing, orchestral performances, and summer vaudeville, with the remainder of the island devoted to lovers’ lanes, picnic grounds, and even a five-acre lake, complete with boat rentals. Visitors would arrive via a planned spur from the Aqueduct Bridge or on barges departing from the foot of New Hampshire Avenue and disembark onto a boardwalk encircling the island’s entire shore. The timetable was as ambitious as the planned construction, with an opening date set for 15 May 1908, barely ten months after the reported purchase.²⁷²

This project, however, never actually began, as the sale remained contested and held up in District Court. The American Colonization Society owned one-tenth of the island through a claim against the Bradleys,²⁷³ and succeeded in blocking the transfer on the grounds that the purchase price was “inadequate and unreasonable.”²⁷⁴ Although this issue was quickly reported resolved,²⁷⁵ the property title remained in abeyance until late 1909.²⁷⁶ In the meantime, the island

²⁶⁸ “Analostan Island Bill: Commissioners Report Adversely Upon Measure Proposing Purchase,” *Washington Post*, 1 May 1902.

²⁶⁹ Charles M. Moore, ed., *Senate Report 166: The Improvement of the Park System of the District of Columbia* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902), 57-58.

²⁷⁰ Fanning, 42.

²⁷¹ “Plan Coney Island Here.”

²⁷² “Will Resemble Coney: Analostan Park Deal Is Now Practically Closed,” *Washington Post*, 3 August 1907; Netherton, “Delicate Beauty,” 52-53.

²⁷³ The American Colonization Society claimed \$9,000 of indebtedness on the island and \$5,000 more in tax claims. See “Order Is Conditional: Ratification on the Sale of Analostan Island,” *Washington Star*, 2 August 1907.

²⁷⁴ “Will Resemble Coney;” “Analostan Sale Halted: American Colonization Society Objects to Transfer of Land,” *Washington Post*, 10 September 1907.

²⁷⁵ “Analostan Island Sold: Court Approves Deal After Property Holders’ Claims Are Satisfied,” *Washington Post*, 14 September 1907.

²⁷⁶ “Buys Analostan Isle: Chicago Concern to Make It an Amusement Resort,” *Washington Post*, 3 October 1909.

remained undeveloped, although a District commissioner did note that its isolation would make it an ideal location for the city's new jail and workhouse.²⁷⁷ In March 1909, a police raid also broke up a large crowd illegally gambling on Analostan Island, indicating that at least some of the more objectionable aspects of its past had returned.²⁷⁸

Later that year, the *Washington Post* reported that after reaching an agreement with the American Colonization Society, the Analostan Improvement Company, a second amusement park developer, had purchased the island.²⁷⁹ However, as with its predecessor, the new company never advanced its design beyond the planning stages. Through the spring of 1913 the only activity reported on the island was an oyster roast sponsored by the American Institute of Banking.²⁸⁰

In May of that year, Joseph Leiter, president of the Washington Gas Light Company, agreed to purchase the unimproved property for approximately \$77,000, some \$23,000 less than the Analostan Improvement Company had paid for it only four years earlier.²⁸¹ On 30 November 1914, Leiter transferred the island to the Washington Gas Light Company, to be held as a potential site for a new gas plant.²⁸² Although the company retained ownership for the next seventeen years, it did not build the plant or any other facilities. During this time, the island was yet again derelict, and evidently inhabited by a dangerous squatter. On 25 April 1924, four canoeists who had gone ashore were attacked by Mrs. Marie Gladys Young who, upon their arrival, exited a shack, shouted "You'd better look out for the dogs," and then returned a moment later and opened fire with a shotgun. Three of the canoeists were hit with buckshot, and one, a young woman, was shot in the back of the head. When the police arrived they found Young in the shack hiding under a table, and charged her with assault with a deadly weapon.²⁸³

The following year, the Washington Gas Light Company submitted a formal request to have the name of the island legally changed from Analostan Island to Mason's Island in honor of George Mason. Several supportive editorials appeared in the *Washington Post* and Senator Swanson and Representative R. Walton Moore of Virginia even lobbied the U.S. Geographic Board in favor of the change.²⁸⁴ Nonetheless, the District commissioners denied the request, stating that "it is a policy to retain the Indian names of islands, streams, and places in this vicinity," and also

²⁷⁷ "Wants Prisons on Island: Commissioner West Suggests New Use for Analostan," *Washington Post*, 13 January 1909.

²⁷⁸ "Youth Guilty of Gambling: Sent to the Workhouse in Default of a \$25 Fine," *Washington Post*, 24 March 1909.

²⁷⁹ "Buys Analostan Isle," "Real Estate Transfers," 3 December 1909.

²⁸⁰ "Lecture and Oyster Roast," *Washington Post*, 24 October 1912.

²⁸¹ "Closes Island Deal: Joseph Leiter Says Analostan May Go to Gas Co.," *Washington Post*, 29 May 1913.

²⁸² Ibid.; "Island to be Gas Plant Site: Company Gets Analostan from Mr. Leiter for that Purpose," *Washington Post*, 5 December 1914.

²⁸³ "3 Canoeists Shot on Island; Woman Held as Assailant," *Washington Post*, 25 April 1924.

²⁸⁴ "George Mason's Island," editorial, *Washington Post*, 18 October 1925; Andrew Jordan Greene, "Washington and Mason," letter, *Washington Post*, 20 October 1925; "Mason Name Urged for Analostan Island," *Washington Post*, 1 December 1925.

incredulously declaring that “Mason was not sufficiently well known and that the name was not euphonious.”²⁸⁵

g. Theodore Roosevelt Island and Memorial, 1931-1967

On 9 September 1931, the Roosevelt Memorial Association (RMA – renamed the Theodore Roosevelt Association, or TRA, in 1953) purchased the island as a living memorial to the former president.²⁸⁶ On 21 May 1932, Congress officially renamed it Roosevelt Island, and less than a year later President Herbert Hoover changed the name to Theodore Roosevelt Island.²⁸⁷ On 27 October 1932, the RMA gave the island to the Federal government under the direction of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks.²⁸⁸ This agency was transferred to the National Park Service in 1933, which then assumed jurisdiction over Theodore Roosevelt Island. The RMA, however, retained authority over the planting plan for the island and also the right to erect a monument to Roosevelt on a later date.²⁸⁹ In May 1932, the RMA hired architect John Russell Pope and the Olmsted Brothers landscape architecture firm to prepare plans for both projects.²⁹⁰ Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. assumed primary responsibility for creating the planting plan and managing the work on site, first directing young men from the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the work of clearing most non-native vegetation, including most remnants of John Mason’s plantings, followed by the subsequent planting of native hardwood trees and shrubs.²⁹¹ By the completion of the project, a total of 35,736 trees, shrubs, and other plants had been newly

²⁸⁵ “Analostan Island Denied New Name: Commissioners Reject Plea of Gas Company to Honor George Mason,” *Washington Post*, 7 October 1925.

²⁸⁶ Fanning, 46.

²⁸⁷ Regarding the renaming to Roosevelt Island, see U.S. Congress, *An Act to Establish a Memorial to Theodore Roosevelt in the National Capital*. Regarding Hoover’s renaming to Theodore Roosevelt Island, see “Analostan Island, Named Roosevelt, Accepted by U.S.,” *Washington Post*, 13 December 1932; “Hoover Accepts Analostan Deed,” *Washington Star*, 13 December 1932; “Roosevelt Shrine Deeded to Nation,” *New York Times*, 13 December 1932; “‘Theodore Roosevelt Island’ Now,” *New York Times*, 15 February 1933; “‘Theodore’ Is Added to Roosevelt Island,” newspaper clipping from file “Theodore Roosevelt Island, 1900-1949,” District of Columbia Public Library, Martin Luther King, Jr., Branch, Washingtoniana Collection. While Theodore Roosevelt was a Republican, his fifth cousin Franklin Delano Roosevelt, a Democrat, had recently trounced Republican incumbent Herbert Hoover in the presidential election of 1932. Hoover’s renaming of the island was in direct response to this defeat. As historian Alan Havig states, the decision was made in order to differentiate the two Roosevelts, “lest anyone confuse the man soon to occupy the White House with the man honored by the patch of land in the river a short distance away.” Havig, Alan. “Presidential Images, History, and Homage: Memorializing Theodore Roosevelt, 1919-1967,” *American Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (autumn 1978): 530. On 11 February 1933, Congress authorized the change in name from “Roosevelt Island” to “Theodore Roosevelt Island” and the new title became official. See “Full Roosevelt Name Asked for Analostan,” *Washington Star*, 8 February 1933; U.S. Congress, *An Act to Change the Name of ‘Roosevelt Island’ to ‘Theodore Roosevelt Island,’* Public – no. 332, 72nd Congress, 11 February 1933.

²⁸⁸ Deed of Gift, Roosevelt Memorial Association to the United States of America, 27 October 1932; “Analostan Island is Now U.S. Property,” *Washington Daily News*, 28 October 1932. The actual land transfer was not official until the following year. See U. S. Grant III, Director, Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital, “Land Transfer Order No. 13,” 2 March 1933. See also “U.S. Takes Over Island,” *Washington Times* [?], 1 November 1932.

²⁸⁹ Special legislation was necessary to allow for the future memorial. See “Analostan Island Plan Faces Snag,” *Washington Star* [?], 28 October 1932 [?].

²⁹⁰ Fanning, 50.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

planted or transplanted in different locations on the island.²⁹² Olmsted's long-term vision was the establishment of a climax forest on the island, which is a forest community that represents the mature stage of natural forest succession for its environment.²⁹³ Therefore, only native species were appropriate, and the ruins of the Mason mansion and outbuildings were at odds with this vision of ecological progression. Despite the protests of concerned architects and historians, the NPS authorized demolition of the ruins. In February 1936, a team from the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) was given a short amount of time to document the site and conduct limited archeological excavations before the ruins were razed.²⁹⁴ Of all the ruins, only a small portion of Mason's icehouse remains visible above ground today.

Despite this strong focus on maintaining the island as a natural memorial, the RMA eventually authorized the construction of the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Bridge over the southern tip of the island. The bridge opened on 23 June 1964. While Olmsted had always included plans for memorial structures within his overall design scheme, several of his original concepts had to be abandoned when the bridge was built. A monument to Roosevelt was nevertheless constructed, located in a clearing within the island's northwest section. The Theodore Roosevelt Memorial incorporates the *Theodore Roosevelt* statue sculpted by artist Paul Manship within an elliptical plaza designed by architect Eric Gugler. Final plans for the memorial were approved in 1961 and work completed in 1967.

h. NPS Management, 1967-2007

Since completion of the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, the NPS has allowed the majority of the island's vegetation to develop naturally, in accordance with Olmsted's vision. The only significant exception to this general rule has been an ongoing effort to control the spread of the invasive exotic English ivy (*Hedera helix*) plant, which outcompetes many native species for available resources and can choke down and kill maturing trees. After many years of planning, the present pedestrian bridge connecting the island with the Virginia shore was constructed in 1979. Before this time visitors could access the island by watercraft or an earthen causeway. During the 1970s and 1980s several small support buildings and information stations were constructed on the island. In addition to the island's original trails, several secondary "social" trails have developed over time through human use. From 1996-98 a raised boardwalk made of recycled plastic was installed as part of the trail system through the swamp located in the northeast section of the island.

²⁹² Robert M. Coates, comp., "Inventory of Work Accomplished by CCC Camps Under the Jurisdiction of National Capital Parks, October 19, 1933 to January 1, 1942" (unpublished report, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, 15 January 1942), 8. In August 1935 the *Washington Daily News* reported that 72,000 young trees were to be planted that fall. However, this claim, and others like it, should be discounted in favor of the 35,736 plants stipulated in the official CCC report. See "Potomac River Bermuda Is Promised When CCC Boys Clear Jungle Island," *Washington Daily News*, 29 August 1935.

²⁹³ Irston R. Barnes, "Roosevelt Island's Unique Role," *Washington Post*, 9 August 1953.

²⁹⁴ Stuart M. Barnette, "Preliminary Report on Exploratory Excavations at the Mason House, Anolostan Island, District of Columbia," (unpublished report, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, ca. 1936). See also Barnette, "Descriptive Data on the Mason House."

2. Architect, Landscape Architect, Designer, Shaper, Creator

a. George Hadfield

Although no surviving documentation provides the name of the architect of the Mason mansion, English architect George Hadfield (1763-1826) is commonly assumed to have been the designer. This supposition rests on the fact that several stylistic elements featured on the mansion are indicative of Hadfield's work. Specifically, according to architectural historian Kay Fanning, the mansion's massing and use of arched recesses to accentuate fenestration patterns closely resemble the architect's designs for Arlington House (1802-18), built for George Washington Parke Custis, and the District of Columbia City Hall (1820-49).²⁹⁵ Mason and Hadfield also had many common acquaintances and shared an interest in experimental model farms.²⁹⁶ Furthermore, Hadfield paid careful attention to the siting of his buildings on the landscape. The Mason mansion, built atop the island's highest point to provide views of Georgetown and downtown Washington, D.C., is typical of a Hadfield design.²⁹⁷ Hadfield immigrated to the United States in October 1795, in order to supervise construction of the north wing of the U.S. Capitol. Critics typically cite this date of arrival to refute Hadfield as the likely architect of the Mason house, as building activities began on the island almost three years before he came to America. However, initial construction seems to have focused on two smaller structures, while the mansion was likely built closer to the turn of the nineteenth century. Therefore, Hadfield, who was dismissed from his position at the U.S. Capitol in 1798, would not only have been in the Washington area around the time of the mansion's construction, but likely looking to secure new contracts.

Architect Stuart Barnette, who led the 1936 HABS project, suggested several other possible architects as the designer of the Mason mansion, including Dr. William Thornton, James Hoban, and Pierce Purcell, each of whom were practicing in the Washington area at the close of the eighteenth century.²⁹⁸ Moreover, architects of the period commonly shared or copied one another's distinctive stylistic elements, so it is possible that the recessed arch, usually associated with Hadfield, was in fact employed by another architect at the Mason mansion. Regardless of who the architect actually was, his considerable skill is obvious in both the design of the house itself, and in its siting on the landscape.

b. David Hepburn

By 1796, John Mason had engaged the talented English gardener David Hepburn in the task of designing and tending Analostan's plantings in what historian Nan Netherton describes as "the most intensive and formal cultivation scheme in the island's entire history."²⁹⁹ Few details are known regarding Hepburn's life, but his career as a gardener spanned some forty years, twenty in England and twenty in the United States. In addition to his work for Mason, he was employed by

²⁹⁵ Fanning, 37.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Barnette, "Descriptive Data on the Mason House," 7.

²⁹⁹ Netherton, "Delicate Beauty," 24.

John Francis Mercer, delegate to the Continental Congress and Constitutional Convention, congressman, governor of Maryland, and longtime friend of Thomas Jefferson.³⁰⁰ Most likely, Hepburn developed the landscape plan for Mercer's estate, Cedar Hill, in West River, Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

In 1804, Hepburn, along with John Gardiner, who is said to have been "a person of skill and experience in horticulture," authored *The American Gardener*, one of the first books to be written on the subject in the United States, and which specifically focused on the region around Washington.³⁰¹ Although there had been a few previous attempts at writing American horticultural manuals and almanacs, the wealthy elite, and their gardeners, remained reliant on English sources when designing their gardens, plantations, and pleasure grounds. According to landscape architect Sarah Pattee Stetson, who has written extensively on the early history of the discipline in the United States: "It soon became apparent to American gardeners that, while they could have no quarrel with the principles set forth in Old-World books, there was a wide disparity in the practices, the precepts, and the materials with which they themselves must work."³⁰² Indeed, "after reading such a book the American horticulturist might well have been discouraged from any elaborate procedure as he looked out on the acres at his own disposal, acres plentiful enough, but untilled, filled with unknown native plants, rudely enclosed, if at all."³⁰³ Gardiner and Hepburn sought to help their fellow countrymen by writing a practical book focused on American plants and American methods for an American audience. While they had the wealthy planter and his trained gardener in mind, the pair also targeted a wider audience in the hopes of cajoling rural landowners into gardening in their spare time. Gardiner and Hepburn

*could not understand why the hunter, the woodsman philosopher, even the small farmer, devoted his leisure hours to smoking 'or perhaps worse' instead of cultivating as he should his sadly neglected grounds. There was a 'certain kind of habitual laziness' which manifested itself in sitting sprawled out in one chair, legs in another, consuming the while ten cigars at a sitting. To correct this, Gardiner and Hepburn recommended the perusal of the proper kind of literature, presumably their own book.*³⁰⁴

The American Gardener was hugely popular and no doubt influenced the majority of gardens in and around Washington during the early eighteenth century. Its success was such that the authors confidently, if self-aggrandizingly, stated that it had been "of incalculable utility to this country."³⁰⁵ The book also carried a ringing endorsement from John Mason, stating that Hepburn

had for six years been employed by him on Mason's Island, Georgetown; that he had for that time conducted all the improvements at that place; that he parted with him with

³⁰⁰ A. J. Morrison, "The Gardener of Williamsburg," *William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine* 25, no. 3 (January 1917): 166.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² Sarah Pattee Stetson, "American Garden Books Transplanted and Native, Before 1807," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, ser. 3, vol. 3, no. 3 (July, 1946): 351.

³⁰³ Ibid, 351-52.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 359.

³⁰⁵ John Gardiner and David Hepburn, prospectus to *The American Gardener*, 2d ed. (Washington, D.C.: Joseph Milligan, 1818).

*great regret; that he could with truth say, Hepburn was well skilled in all the branches of gardening, and that as a practical man in the culture of vegetables and fruit trees he could not be excelled.*³⁰⁶

c. John Mason

John Mason himself probably had a hand in designing Analostan's landscape, having been influenced by his father's design for Gunston Hall, as well as his firsthand knowledge of French and English picturesque gardening.³⁰⁷ George Mason's Gunston Hall plantation, where John was born and raised, featured a central allee stretching from the hilltop, where the mansion was built, down through the gardens to a point overlooking the Potomac River. The correlation with the landscape of Analostan Island is unmistakable. Later in his life John Mason wrote extensively on his childhood at Gunston Hall. His particularly detailed accounts of the plantation landscape suggest that he had his father's home in mind when laying out his own property, but John Mason would also have been familiar with other similarly ostentatious estates through his business contacts. Chief among these were Washington and Jefferson, both of whom incorporated formal and picturesque landscape arrangements at their respective estates of Mount Vernon and Monticello.³⁰⁸

John Mason's development of the island was also likely inspired by examples he encountered during his two years abroad in England and, most particularly, France. During the eighteenth century, France's wealthy elite embraced the burgeoning Baroque gardening tradition and crafted elaborately designed landscapes showcasing wide allees, lavish parterres, ornamental hedgerows, and ornate gardens. The most famous of these pleasure grounds is the glorious Château de Versailles, but similar seats were dotted throughout the country. It is not difficult to see an ambitious young John Mason, with the assistance and vision of David Hepburn, planning his own, distinctly American, version of one of Europe's most celebrated country retreats.

d. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.

Some one hundred years after the Mason family departed, the RMA and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. began transforming Theodore Roosevelt Island into a forested haven set within the urban expanse of downtown Washington, D.C. It was entirely fitting that the RMA selected Olmsted for this project. His father, Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., had emerged as the primary figure in the development of the American school of landscape design with his development of New York's Central Park in the 1850s. Olmsted, Sr.'s contributions to the nascent field of landscape architecture were immense, including over sixty principal projects ranging in scope from his naturalistic treatment of the Yosemite Valley (1865), to the carefully manicured U.S. Capitol grounds and terraces (1874), to the residential Stanford University campus (1886). Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. continued and expanded upon his father's work, most notably the preservation and enhancement of native scenery in landscape design. According to Fanning, throughout their careers both father and son "sought the pictorial, the sensuous, and the aesthetic." Likewise, both

³⁰⁶ John Mason, quoted in Gardiner and Hepburn, prospectus to *The American Gardener*, 2d ed.

³⁰⁷ Fanning, 37.

³⁰⁸ Fanning, 38.

believed that experiencing a landscape was necessarily a spiritual exercise, and that their designs should draw out and accentuate its inherent natural qualities, its *genus loci*.³⁰⁹ Late in his life Olmsted, Jr. summarized this design philosophy:

*In dealing with existing real landscapes, I have been guided by an injunction impressed on me by my distinguished father: namely, that when one becomes responsible for what is to happen to such a landscape his prime duty is to protect and perpetuate whatever of beauty and inspirational value, inherent in that landscape, is due to nature and to circumstances not of one's own contriving, and to humbly subordinate to that purpose any impulse to exercise upon it one's own skill as a creative designer.*³¹⁰

Finally, both Olmsteds believed that parks could provide a much needed respite from the stresses of urban life, and even function as a setting where social status and class divisions largely disappeared and citizens could mingle and interact on equal terms.³¹¹

Father and son worked in tandem during the 1890s on the design of George Vanderbilt's immense Biltmore estate in Asheville, North Carolina. At Biltmore, his first project after graduating from Harvard in 1894, Olmsted, Jr. began to finalize the design philosophy that he would maintain throughout his illustrious career. His and his father's devotion to accentuating natural scenic beauty is clearly evident through their massing, layering, and placement of native trees, shrubs, and small plants to create a graceful yet powerful landscape.³¹² While at Biltmore, the Olmsteds also collaborated with a young Gifford Pinchot, who developed the first scientifically managed forest in the United States on the grounds of the estate.³¹³ Pinchot ardently believed that the nation's natural resources should be managed to provide for its economic needs, a policy that he implemented as head of the U.S. Forest Service under the administration of President Theodore Roosevelt.

Although Pinchot held the necessary political power to implement his management strategy, this economic model was not the only viewpoint regarding the wise use of America's natural resources. In particular, Pinchot often clashed with naturalist John Muir, who deeply opposed what he viewed as the commercialization of nature. Muir's beliefs expanded upon those of Charles Eliot, a partner in the Olmsted firm until his untimely death in 1897, and who also played a critical role in shaping Olmsted, Jr.'s views on nature and its role in landscape design. Eliot was more than a designer, authoring pioneering articles for scholarly journals and the popular press devoted to horticulture, landscape history, landscape literature, and the preservation and management of landscapes of natural, scenic, or historic significance.³¹⁴ Moreover, he was the leading figure behind the 1891 establishment of Massachusetts' Trustees

³⁰⁹ Ibid., 48.

³¹⁰ American Academy for Park & Recreation Administration, *Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.: Cornelius Amory Pugsley Gold Medal Award, 1953* (College Station, Tex.: Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, Texas A&M University, n.d.), <http://www.rpts.tamu.edu/Pugsley/Olmstead.htm> (accessed 25 July 2007).

³¹¹ Fanning, 49.

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ Randal O'Toole, *Reforming the Forest Service* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1988), 5.

³¹⁴ Keith N. Morgan, "Eliot, Charles," in *Pioneers of American Landscape Design*, eds. Charles A. Birnbaum and Robin Karson (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000), 108-09.

of Public Reservations, the first statewide, private-sector organization devoted to the conservation of natural areas and the preservation of historic sites. The Trustees became a model for subsequent groups, including the National Trust in Great Britain and the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States.³¹⁵

In his preservation efforts, Eliot sought to minimize human use on the landscape and advocated for the use of sound ecological studies as the basis for design.³¹⁶ Olmsted, Jr.'s concept of the climax forest for Theodore Roosevelt Island followed naturally from these ideas. Although he designed the site with visitors in mind, and even included amenities for their benefit, Olmsted conceived of the island as a natural landscape modeled after the forest that dominated the area before widespread human alterations to the landscape. While clearly not a landscape preservation project, it was, in essence, a landscape restoration. That Olmsted used the appropriate native species, in appropriate settings and groupings, to offer a representative view of the "primaeval forest" inherently required an appreciation and understanding of the region's ecology.

In addition to his work on Theodore Roosevelt Island, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. and his firm, Olmsted Brothers, completed thousands of landscape projects nationwide. He was particularly active in Washington, D.C., and was involved in developing the management plan for Rock Creek Park (1919) and the designs for the Washington National Cathedral grounds (begun 1910), Washington Monument Reflecting Pool (1912), Lincoln Memorial grounds (1922), Union Square at the western terminus of the National Mall (1928), and the White House grounds (1935). Olmsted served as a member of many advisory bodies, including the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) and the National Capital Park and Planning Commission (NCPPC). He also returned to Harvard as an instructor in 1900, developing the nation's first landscape architecture degree program and serving as an instructor until 1914. During this time he also emerged as a key member of the burgeoning planning profession through his leadership at the 1910 National Conference on City Planning. Through his leadership over the next nine years, Olmsted helped lay the theoretical foundation for the new discipline, and in 1917 he became the first president of the American City Planning Institute, the first organization for professional city planners in America.³¹⁷ Between 1905 and 1915 he produced planning reports for Detroit, Utica, Boulder, Pittsburgh, New Haven, Rochester, and Newport, and created master plans for new sections of Roland Park, a Baltimore suburb, and Forest Hills Gardens, a model garden community near New York City. Many features of his suburban plans remain key aspects of modern planning, including neighborhood-centered development, differentiation of streets by function, common open and recreational spaces, and aesthetic oversight throughout the development process.³¹⁸

In the latter part of his career, Olmsted devoted much of his time to public projects, and for thirty years he advised the National Park Service on management issues and the conservation of water and scenic resources.³¹⁹ He authored the statement of purpose for the 1916 National Park Service Organic Act, defining the parks' "fundamental purpose" to "conserve the scenery and the natural

³¹⁵ Ibid., 107.

³¹⁶ Fanning, 48-49.

³¹⁷ Susan L. Klaus, "Olmsted, Frederick Law, Jr.," in *Pioneers of American Landscape Design*, 274.

³¹⁸ Ibid., 273.

³¹⁹ Ibid., 275.

and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”³²⁰ Olmsted also worked on projects in Maine’s Acadia National Park, the Florida Everglades, and Yosemite. In 1928 he authored a comprehensive survey and report documenting the opportunities and needs for state parks in California, which became a model for other states. He campaigned tirelessly on behalf of the Save-the-Redwoods League, which has since 1919 protected more than 177,000 acres through parks and reserves. On the occasion of his eighty-third birthday in 1953, he was honored with the Olmsted Grove, a stand of redwoods purchased by his friends and admirers. At the dedication, Horace M. Albright, second director of the National Park Service, remarked, “I think he is the greatest of Parks men in the world, indeed the greatest of all time; for who among contemporaries or in the past has so wisely, soundly and with vast professional skill, so profoundly influenced plans and programs for local, state and national parks as Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.”³²¹

e. Eric Gugler

New York architect Eric Gugler (1889-1974) created the plan for the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial plaza in 1961 in consultation with sculptor Paul Manship. This project was typical for Gugler, who specialized in designs of public buildings and monuments. He is best known for carrying out the enlargement and reconstruction of the Executive (West) Wing of the White House in 1934. This work essentially created the White House as seen in the present day, and involved an extension of the second floor, expansion of the basement offices, and relocation of the Oval Office and Cabinet Room to the west side of the building.³²² During this renovation, Gugler cultivated a friendship with President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and upon his death designed the first memorial to FDR, a simple marble block located on the lawn of the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C., near the intersection of Ninth Street, NW and Pennsylvania Avenue.³²³ Gugler’s other prominent projects include the rehabilitation of New York’s Subtreasury Building, the Business Administration Building of the New York World’s Fair (1939-1940), and the 200-foot peristyle Chicago War Memorial (1930), dedicated to the fallen soldiers of World War I.³²⁴ As with these works, two unrealized projects, the Hall of Our History for Pine Mountain, Georgia, and the Battery Park Project for New York, further demonstrate the inspirational, commemorative, and patriotic themes that defined his work.³²⁵

Gugler was also an accomplished mural painter and sculptor. As the former he painted maps of the eastern and western worlds, and also of the universe, for the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania,

³²⁰ *An Act to Establish a National Park Service, and for Other Purposes*, 16 U.S. Code, secs. 1-4.

³²¹ American Academy for Park & Recreation Administration.

³²² “Eric Gugler,” in *Arts Legacy*, dir. Gregory Mosher (Arts Initiative, Columbia University, 2007), <http://www.cuarts.com/legacy/> (accessed 2 August 2007).

³²³ “Roosevelt Stone to be Dedicated: Capital to Get 1st Memorial to Wartime President,” *New York Times*, 4 April 1965.

³²⁴ “Chicago to Build Memorial in Lake: Two New York Architects Won \$20,000 Prize for Design of War Monument,” *New York Times*, 15 December 1929; “Eric Gugler, 85, Architect Dies,” *New York Times*, 17 May 1974.

³²⁵ Patricia C. Phillips, “Gugler, Eric,” in *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, vol. 2, ed. Adolf K. Plazek (New York: The Free Press, 1982), 282.

Educational Building.³²⁶ In addition to the FDR Memorial, he sculpted statues of Eleanor Roosevelt for New York's United Nations Building, Harvey Firestone in Akron, Ohio, William and Charles Mayo in Rochester, Minnesota, and Waldo Hutchins in Central Park. His greatest achievement in the discipline came as the designer of the World War II Sicily-Rome American Cemetery and Memorial at Nettuno, Italy, for which he earned the Henry Hering Medal of the National Sculpture Society.³²⁷

At the outset of his professional career, Gugler spent three years (1911-14) studying at the National Academy in Rome as a McKim fellow.³²⁸ He later served as a member of several professional organizations: the advisory board of the National Park Service, the American Institute of Architects, the National Sculpture Society, the National Institute of Arts and Letters, and the National Academy of Design. Furthermore, he actively preserved historic sites and structures as a trustee of the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, most notably a historic Long Island barn. Working with actress Katharine Cornell and her husband, producer and director Guthrie McClintic, Gugler completely dismantled the barn and transported it to the couple's seven-acre estate on the Hudson River, where it was painstakingly reassembled.³²⁹

f. Paulanship

As with Eric Gugler, American sculptor Paul Manship (1885-1966) studied at the American Academy in Rome early in his professional career, attending the institution from 1909-12 after winning the highly competitive Prix de Rome scholarship.³³⁰ During this time Manship began developing his characteristic archaistic style, which, according to art historian Susan Rather, "combined naturalistic anatomy with abstract treatment of details and stylized gestures informed by archaic art," especially that of Ancient Greece.³³¹ Due to this archaic influence, Manship revived significant sculptural qualities, such as a feeling for structure in line and arrangements based on large, bold masses of form, which had been abandoned by most artists of the time.³³² This incorporation of traditional artistic elements resonated with conservative patrons, but Manship also imbued his works with a vitality and expressiveness more in line with the increasingly popular Modern Art movement. As his sculpture appealed to both camps, Manship's unique talent was in great demand, and from the time of the artist's first show in 1912, his studio remained busy, even during the Great Depression, when the artist retained up to eight assistants at one time.³³³

Manship produced over 700 works in his career, chief among them *Centaur and Dryad* (winner of the 1913 Barnett Prize of the National Academy of Design), *Dancer and Gazelles* (winner of the 1917 Barnett Prize), *Diana* (1925) and *Actaeon* (1925). His most famous public works

³²⁶ "Shrine of Learning Tells Man's Story," *New York Times*, 1 November 1931.

³²⁷ "Eric Gugler, 85, Architect Dies."

³²⁸ Phillips, 282.

³²⁹ "Eric Gugler, 85, Architect Dies."

³³⁰ Tom Armstrong et al., "Paul Manship," in *200 Years of American Sculpture* (Boston: D.R. Godine, 1976), 291.

³³¹ Susan Rather, review of *Paul Manship*, by John Manship, *Archives of American Art Journal* 31, no. 2 (1991): 32.

³³² Henry Adams, review of *Paul Manship*, by Harry Rand, *The Burlington Magazine* 132, no. 1042 (January, 1990): 46.

³³³ Rather, 33.

include the *Prometheus Fountain* (1934) at New York's Rockefeller Center and the *Celestial Sphere* (1939), a grand armillary sphere created as a memorial to Woodrow Wilson and installed outside the League of Nations Building in Geneva, Switzerland, now the European Headquarters of the United Nations. In 1916, Manship was elected an academician of the National Academy, and in 1922 he returned to the American Academy in Rome as professor of sculpture. He held many additional honors and memberships, including chairman of the Smithsonian Art Commission from 1944 until his death in 1966.³³⁴

Although not known as a portraitist, Manship sculpted statues of a young Abraham Lincoln, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Revolutionary statesman Samuel Osgood, industrialist John D. Rockefeller, poet Robert Frost, painter Gifford Beal, and politician Henry L. Stimson. He also created several numismatic pieces, chief among them the celebrated John F. Kennedy inaugural medal and numerous military decorations, including the Bronze Star and Distinguished Service Medal.³³⁵ Installed as the centerpiece of the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial in 1967, the year after the artist's death, the *Theodore Roosevelt* is Manship's final portrait sculpture, and among the last of all his works. The memorial also marked the final collaboration between Manship and Gugler. The pair had previously worked together on several projects, including the Sicily-Rome American Cemetery and Memorial,³³⁶ a previous plan for the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial featuring another of Manship's armillary spheres, and the proposed Washington, D.C., Freedom Shrine.³³⁷

3. Builder, Contractor, Laborers, Suppliers

a. Slaves

Both George Mason IV and John Mason owned slaves, and most likely utilized them as the physical labor required to carry out improvements on the island. This work would have included construction of the ferry house, mansion, and outbuildings, as well as tilling fields, tending the sheep, and planting the gardens under Hepburn's direction. Specific references to slaves are rare, although John Mason's advertisement for "12-15 stout young Negro Fellows" shows that a substantial number were required on the island, at least for a time.

³³⁴ Armstrong et al., 291-92.

³³⁵ For a thorough listing of Manship's works, see Smithsonian American Art Museum, *Art Inventories Catalog, Smithsonian Institution Research Information System (SIRIS)* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 2004): <http://siris-artinventories.si.edu> (accessed 13 July 2007).

³³⁶ Manship created the *Brothers-in-Arms* sculpture for the memorial, depicting an American soldier and sailor standing side by side with an arm around the other's shoulder. The artist also designed the *Remembrance* and *Resurrection* panels for the chapel, as well as ornamentation for the building's altar and ceiling. See American Battle Monuments Commission, *Sicily-Rome American Cemetery and Memorial* (Arlington, Va.: American Battle Monuments Commission, n.d.), 4-6: http://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries/cemeteries/sr_base.pdf (accessed 12 July 2007).

³³⁷ Never constructed, the Freedom Shrine was to have been a large, open structure measuring approximately 327' long x 204' wide x 68' high, overlooking the Potomac River between the U.S. Marine Corps Memorial and the Netherlands Carillon. Through Eric Gugler's architecture, and reliefs and inscriptions by Manship, it was to have presented the history of American democracy. See Ada Louise Huxtable, "\$24,000,000 Shrine Is Proposed for Capital," *New York Times*, 3 June 1960.

b. Civilian Conservation Corps

No aspect of Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.'s vision for Theodore Roosevelt Island could have been realized without the participation of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) enrollees who actually carried out the work of reestablishing its native climax forest. Workers from CCC Camp NP-6-VA, located at Fort Hunt, Virginia, began the process in May 1934 with the initial removal of deadwood and undesirable, mostly non-native vegetation (Figure 18).³³⁸ Later, on 14 November 1934, another CCC camp, NP-8-VA, was established much nearer the island, adjacent to the northwest side of the Memorial Avenue Bridge, near the cities of Arlington and Rosslyn, Virginia.³³⁹ This new camp increasingly took over responsibility for operations on Theodore Roosevelt Island, and eventually became associated with the site itself.³⁴⁰ Intensive work on the island ended in 1937, and consequently "Camp Roosevelt Island" was discontinued the following year on 30 August 1938.³⁴¹ Sporadic work, mostly weeding, continued until the island was appropriated for military training during World War II, and was most likely carried out by members of Camp NP-6-VA.

On 15 January 1942, the National Park Service released a comprehensive inventory of the work accomplished by the CCC camps of the National Capital Parks from 19 October 1933 to 1 January 1942. Regarding Theodore Roosevelt Island, CCC crews laid 2.5 miles of 4' wide walking trails and 1.5 miles of 10' wide bridle paths, both comprised of a gravel base and sand-clay surface. Four acres were graded for use as a picnic area and 3.5 acres as part of a planned outlook terrace. Enrollees also selectively cut and thinned thirty acres of forest growth to provide vistas and "to open up views of interesting spots to the mainland."³⁴² They carried out the removal of deadwood, debris, and exotic or otherwise unwanted plants across the entire island, and then prepared twenty-seven acres of cleared soil for the subsequent planting or transplanting of 35,736 "native large and small growing forest species trees and characteristic undergrowth shrubs and ferns."³⁴³ Finally, workers from Camp NP-8-VA conducted an archeological excavation of the Mason mansion site under the supervision of HABS Architectural Historian Stuart Barnette. This work was largely completed by March 1937, and crews raised the above ground ruins shortly thereafter. However, all artifacts and other pertinent material uncovered during the archeological survey were placed in a concrete vault and reburied on the site.³⁴⁴

³³⁸ "Roosevelt Island to Become Park," *Washington Star*, 6 February 1934; "Roosevelt Island Changes Opposed," *Washington Star*, June [?] 1934.

³³⁹ Lisa Pfueller Davidson, "Historical Overview Narrative," in "Civilian Conservation Corps Activities in the National Capital Region of the National Park Service" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) No. DC-858, 2005), 39.

³⁴⁰ In October 1936, Civilian Conservation Corps foreman H. A. Hubler referred to the Arlington/Rosslyn camp as "Camp Roosevelt Island," showing that the island had become an important enough project site by this time to inform the name of the camp itself. See H. A. Hubler, "Plant Materials Required to Complete Planting Roosevelt Island," 29 October 1936, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

³⁴¹ Davidson, 39.

³⁴² Coates, 8.

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ Fanning, 116.

c. Baldi & Sons

On 24 June 1963, the National Park Service awarded the Baldi & Sons construction company of Bladensburg, Maryland, the construction contract for the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial. Baldi & Sons turned in the low bid at \$822,885.³⁴⁵ Their contract called for completion within 540 days, and included “all work on the site except that on the statue.”³⁴⁶ Eugene Baldi submitted the bid and held ultimate responsibility for the project. Engineer Patrick Turner supervised the construction team, including Carl Huber, Jr., president of the Huber Stone Setting Company of Silver Spring, Maryland.³⁴⁷ In addition to actually installing the memorial, much of the preparatory construction work was conducted on site, including cutting the granite blocks for the surface of the plaza. Workers, supplies, and materials arrived via a temporary construction causeway connecting the island with the Virginia coast. Most facets of the memorial, including the underlying granite slabs and moat, were also completed in sections and numbered, “to be put together like a jigsaw puzzle.”³⁴⁸ Although work progressed steadily, the project experienced considerable delays, due in large part to alterations to the fountains and concerns over the height of their spray.³⁴⁹ Baldi & Sons did not complete construction until fall 1966, and on 18 August the *Washington Post* quoted Eugene Baldi’s desire to finally finish: “This has been one of those long-delayed jobs,” and “we’d love to get rid of it.”³⁵⁰

In addition to the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, Baldi & Sons completed many other construction projects in and around Washington, D.C. These jobs included serving as the general contractor during the 1962 addition to the Bancroft School at Eighteenth and Newton streets, NW, and construction of a 128,000 square-foot roasting and manufacturing facility for the Wilkins Coffee Co. in Landover, Maryland.³⁵¹ In December 1966, the NPS again awarded the company a contract, this time \$323,000 to build a modern visitors’ center at the Virginia side of Great Falls.³⁵² Over two decades later, in April 1988, the Associated Builders and Contractors National Federal Credit Union of Washington named Eugene Baldi as president of its board.³⁵³

³⁴⁵ “Bid Accepted On Memorial to Roosevelt,” *Washington Star*, 26 June 1963.

³⁴⁶ “Roosevelt Island Contract Is Let,” *Washington Post*, 25 June 1963.

³⁴⁷ John McKelway, “The Rambler . . . Takes A Spin,” *Washington Star*, 23 March 1964; “Memorial to T. R. Rises on Island,” *Washington Post*, 10 October 1965; “Architect’s model shows how Roosevelt Memorial will look when completed . . .” newspaper clipping from file “Theodore Roosevelt Island 1960—,” District of Columbia Public Library, Martin Luther King, Jr., Branch, Washingtoniana Collection.

³⁴⁸ “Memorial Progress,” *Washington Daily News*, 10 February 1965.

³⁴⁹ “Teddy Roosevelt Memorial Opening Delayed,” *Washington Daily News*, 16 August 1966.

³⁵⁰ Nancy Weiss, “Roosevelt Island Memorial Delayed,” *Washington Post*, 18 August 1966.

³⁵¹ “Safety Violation Costs Firm \$600,” *Washington Post and Times Herald*, 20 September 1962; “Wilkins Plans New Plant at Landover,” *Washington Post and Times Herald*, 18 August 1964.

³⁵² Carolyn Hughes and Wolf Von Eckardt, “U.S. to Build Great Falls Visitor Center,” *Washington Post and Times Herald*, 29 December 1966.

³⁵³ “Appointments,” *Washington Post*, 25 April 1988.

d. Fonderia Artistica Battaglia

Paul Manship's bronze *Theodore Roosevelt* was cast at the Fonderia Artistica Battaglia (Battaglia Art Foundry) in Milan, Italy.³⁵⁴ The foundry's name is located on the north corner, west side, of the sculpture's bronze base, and is abbreviated as *FOND ARTIS BATTAGLIA. C. MILANO ITALY*. The engraving appears to have been done freehand, before the bronze hardened.

e. Bruno Bearzi

The *Theodore Roosevelt* statue arrived on the island on 6 May 1966, but remained enclosed in a wooden crate, save the upraised right hand, until the memorial's dedication on 27 October 1967.³⁵⁵ Shortly after the statue's arrival, Bruno Bearzi (1894-1983), an internationally renowned Italian bronze-caster and conservator, traveled to the United States to inspect the statue and apply a protective finish. Manship personally selected Bearzi prior to his death in 1966,³⁵⁶ as the pair had previously worked together on numerous projects, including the Woodrow Wilson *Celestial Sphere* and the chapel of the Sicily-Rome American Cemetery.³⁵⁷ During his career Bearzi also served as conservator of the Uffizi Galleries in Florence and director of the city's art foundry, the Fonderia Artistica Fiorentina.³⁵⁸

4. Original and Subsequent Owners and Occupants

20 June 1632 Charter, King Charles I of England to Cecilius Calvert, Second Lord Baltimore³⁵⁹

This charter created the Maryland Colony, the lands of which, including present-day Theodore Roosevelt Island, were carved out of the Virginia Colony. Native American peoples, likely the

³⁵⁴ Lynda A. Zycherman and Nicolas F. Veloz, Jr., "Conservation of a Monumental Outdoor Bronze Sculpture: 'Theodore Roosevelt' by Paul Manship," *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation* 19, no. 1 (autumn, 1979): 24.

³⁵⁵ "Ready and Waiting," *Washington Post*, 17 January 1967; John Fialka, "Roosevelt Shrine Open, but Teddy's Shut In," *Washington Star*, 30 March 1967; Lee Flor, "Veiled Statue of Roosevelt Baffles Tourists," *Washington Star*, 9 August 1967; Hugh McDiarmid, "TR Memorial Statue Is Just a Big Bust," *Washington Post*, 14 September 1967.

³⁵⁶ Zycherman and Veloz, Jr., 24.

³⁵⁷ Regarding the sphere, see Maecenas World Patrimony Foundation, "The History," in *The Sphere* (Amsterdam: Maecenas World Patrimony Foundation, 2005), <http://www.celestialsphere.ch/history.html> (accessed 16 July 2007). Regarding the chapel, see American Battle Monuments Commission, 6-7.

³⁵⁸ Regarding Bearzi's position as conservator of the Uffizi Galleries, see Lenore O. Keene Congdon, "The Mantua Apollo of the Fogg Art Museum," *American Journal of Archaeology* 67, no. 1 (January, 1963): 7-13. Regarding his position as director of the Fonderia Artistica Fiorentina, see Fine Arts Sculpture Centre, Inc., "History," in *Welcome to the New Age of Bronze* (Clarkston, Mich.: Fine Arts Awards Centre, 2000), <http://fineartsonline.net/history.asp> (accessed 16 July 2007).

³⁵⁹ Maryland State Archives, *The Charter of Maryland* (Annapolis, Md.: Maryland State Archives, Special Collections, Huntingfield Corporation Collection, 2006), <http://www.msa.md.gov/msa/educ/exhibits/founding/html/charter.html> (accessed 24 July 2007).

Necostin (Anacostin) tribe and their progenitors, inhabited or otherwise utilized the island from prehistoric times.

16 November 1675 Will, Cecilius Calvert, Second Lord Baltimore, to Charles Calvert, Third Lord Baltimore

When Cecilius Calvert died his lands and title passed to his only surviving son, Charles Calvert, Third Lord Baltimore.

21 July 1680 Land patent, Charles Calvert, Third Lord Baltimore, to Randolph Brandt³⁶⁰

Calvert granted Captain Brandt a 200-acre tract as payment for protecting the Maryland colonists from attacks by hostile Indians. The land included “an Island in Potomack River near the falls of said River over against Rock Creek in Charles County commonly called or known by the name of Anacostian Ile and containing by estimation seventy five acres more or less to be held Zachiah manor called Barbadoes.” Brandt, who had previously lived on the island of Barbadoes in the West Indies, appears to have named his new property after his former home. There is, however, no indication that he settled or otherwise improved the island, although Native American habitation and use may have continued during Brandt’s ownership.

1698 Will, Randolph Brandt to Francis and Margaret Hammersly³⁶¹

In his will, probated 1698, Randolph Brandt left his daughter Margaret and her husband Francis Hammersly property and land including “One Island Called Barbadoes neere [sic] falls of Pottomack Containing Seventy five Acres or thereabouts.”

25 August 1717 Deed, Francis and Margaret Hammersly to George Mason III³⁶²

According to the deed, at the cost of £35 sterling, Mason III purchased “all that tract or island . . . over against Rock Creeke [sic] commonly called or know by the name of Annalostian Island alias Barbadoes containing by estimation and laid out for 75 acres more or less formerly granted to Capt. Randolph Brandt.” Historians and researchers typically consider 1717 as the approximate year Native American occupation and use of the island ceased, an estimation based on the declining influence of Native Americans in the region and the subsequent improvements carried out by the Mason family during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In reality, Native American habitation and use may have ceased prior to George Mason III’s acquisition of the island, or continued into the mid-eighteenth century.

³⁶⁰ Certified 29 April 1682, Richard Edelen, Deputy Surveyor, Maryland Patents, Vol. 21, p. 363, Maryland Hall of Records, Annapolis, Md., quoted in Shannon, “The Rambler Writes Second Article on History of Analostan Island.”

³⁶¹ Maryland Wills, Vol. 6, pp. 222-226, Maryland Hall of Records, Annapolis, Md., quoted in Netherton, “Delicate Beauty,” 13; Curry, 19.

³⁶² Deed Book F, p. 1, Prince George’s County, Md., quoted in Netherton, “Delicate Beauty,” 14. In the article “The Rambler’s Third Article on Early History of Analostan Island” Shannon gives the date of 27 August 1717, according to “the records of Charles county and the files of the Real Estate and Columbia Title companies of Washington.”

1746 Will, George Mason III to George Mason IV³⁶³

George Mason III died unexpectedly in 1735, drowning when his boat capsized in the Potomac River. Since his oldest son, George Mason IV, was only ten at the time, the estate passed to his widow Anne Mason until Mason IV came of age in 1746, at which time he inherited several thousand acres of land, including the island.

20 March 1773 Will, George Mason IV to John Mason³⁶⁴

George Mason IV died on 7 October 1792, and his will was probated on 16 October. Mason IV bequeathed to his fourth son, John Mason, “all my lands adjoining to and near Rock Creek Ferry upon Potomack River,” including “my Island in Potomack River, opposite the mouth of Rock Creek, which I hold under a patent from the Lord Proprietor of Marlyand by the name of Barbadoes.” This inheritance included the profitable Mason’s Ferry running across the Potomac from Georgetown to one or more landings on the island’s north end. The ferry house, located on the island’s northeast shore, had also most likely been constructed by this time.

31 December 1825 Deed of trust, John Mason to Richard Smith³⁶⁵

Journalist J. Harry Shannon’s newspaper article, “The Rambler Traces the History of Analostan Island from Early Days,” provides a large amount of detailed information regarding this transaction. Beginning in 1825, Mason sustained a series of economic losses due to poor business decisions and land speculation, taking out a total of \$28,560 in promissory notes in that year alone. Mason executed this deed of trust, recorded 31 March 1826, as a means of securing the necessary capital to cover the notes. Richard Smith is listed as “cashier of the office of discount and deposit of the Bank of the United States at the city of Washington,” and acted as the bank’s agent in accepting the deed of trust. Continued economic failures caused Mason to take out a second deed of trust on 29 November 1829. In addition to the island and its mansion house, the Bank of the United States also held much of Mason’s considerable Virginia land holdings under deed of trust as collateral against the money owed.

26 April 1833 Deed, John Mason and Wife to Bank of the United States³⁶⁶

Shannon’s article continues with an account of the bank’s foreclosure. Unable to repay their debts, John and Anna Maria Mason defaulted on their deeds of trust in 1833. For the sum of \$5, they signed a deed transferring ownership of the island to the Bank of the United States on 26

³⁶³ Fairfax County Will Book F-1, p. 107, Fairfax County Courthouse, Fairfax, Va., quoted in Netherton, “Delicate Beauty,” 17.

³⁶⁴ Fairfax County Will Book, F-1, p. 107, Fairfax County Courthouse, Fairfax, Va., quoted in Shannon, “The Rambler’s Third Article on Early History of Analostan Island.”

³⁶⁵ Liber W.B. No. 16 (1825-1826), p. 302 old, p. 233 new, Recorder of Deeds, Washington, D.C., cited in Curry, 24; Shannon, “The Rambler Traces the History of Analostan Island from Early Days.”

³⁶⁶ Liber W.B. No. 46 (1833), p. 84, Recorder of Deeds, Washington, D.C., cited in Curry, 24; Shannon, “The Rambler Traces the History of Analostan Island from Early Days.”

April. They also lost over 1,800 acres of land in Virginia. The transaction was recorded on 18 June 1833.

1838 Deed of trust, Bank of the United States to Richard Smith, trustee³⁶⁷

Again Shannon's article provides the details of this transaction. According to Shannon, the deed "recites that the president, directors, and company of the Bank of the United States had conveyed the island to Richard Smith and his heirs for certain uses, trusts and purposes," although it remained the legal possession of the bank. Smith, in turn, held the property for, and likely received rent payments from, twelve "tenants in common:" Clement Smith, William S. Nicholls, John Kurtz, John Carter, William Jewel, William W. Corcoran, Samuel Swartwont, Dudley Seldon, Elisha Riggs, Walter Mead, John S., and John Wheelright

1 August 1842 Deed, Richard Smith and William S. Nicholls to John Carter³⁶⁸

John Carter, one of the aforementioned "tenants in common" purchased the island for \$8,600. The deed was recorded the next month, on 17 September.

11 November 1844 Will of John Carter³⁶⁹

According to Shannon, Carter left a long, complicated will that was probated on 19 June 1850, shortly after his death. Carter did not confer the island to an heir, but rather directed his executor, John Marbury, to sell the property and apply the proceeds "to the payment of my pecuniary legacies."

1852 Deed, Estate of John Carter to William A. Bradley³⁷⁰

As executor of John Carter's will, John Marbury authorized the sale of the island to Bradley for \$2,571.50, paid to the Carter estate.

7 August 1866 Will, William A. Bradley, to William A. Bradley, Jr., and Thomas A. Bradley, trustees³⁷¹

Shannon's article, "The Rambler Writes of the Charm of Historic Old Analostan," includes an excerpt of the will, probated 3 September 1867, in which Bradley bequeaths "all of my estate . . .

³⁶⁷ Liber W.B. No. 67 (1838), pp. 42-62, Recorder of Deeds, Washington, D.C., cited in Curry, 24-25; Shannon, "The Rambler Traces the History of Analostan Island from Early Days."

³⁶⁸ District of Columbia Liber W.B. No. 95 (1842), p. 145 old, p. 107 new, Recorder of Deeds, Washington, D.C., cited in Curry, 25.

³⁶⁹ District of Columbia Will Book 6, pp. 300-313, cited in Netherton, "Delicate Beauty," 42; Shannon, "The Rambler Traces the History of Analostan Island from Early Days."

³⁷⁰ No. 3084 old series, Suitland Records Center, Suitland, Md., cited in Curry, 25; Netherton, "Delicate Beauty," 42-43.

³⁷¹ Wills No. 10, Nov. 3, 1864 to Sept. 7, 1867, p. 475, Suitland Records Center, Md., cited in Curry, 26; Shannon, "The Rambler Writes of the Charm of Historic Old Analostan." See also Estate of William A. Bradley, No. 5530, old series, Suitlands Record Center, Suitland, Md., cited in Curry, 26.

to my son, William A. Bradley, Jr., and my cousin, Thomas A. Bradley, their heirs, executor or administrators, the survivor of them, his heirs, executor or administrator, in trust.” The trustees were to divide his estate into “four equal parts, as nearly as in their judgment and valuation can be done,” with one part going to William A Bradley, Jr., the second to “the child of my said son now or hereafter born in lawful wedlock,” and one part to each of his two daughters. The island itself is never explicitly mentioned, meaning it was left up to the two trustees to designate it as a portion of one of the quarter-shares taken from the overall estate. William A. Bradley, Jr. died two years later in 1869, and his death, combined with the complexities of his father’s will, resulted in co-ownership of the island by Powell M. Bradley, Frederick W. Bradley, and Maria G. Bradley, later Dewey by marriage.

1886 Deed of trust, Powell M. Bradley to Reginald Fendall, trustee³⁷²

This is the first deed of trust issued to Fendall by the Bradley heirs, but over the next thirteen years the property would be repeatedly transferred between the two parties and used as security against a debt that steadily increased to \$80,000.

July 1889 Lease, Reginald Fendall, trustee, to James F. Hood, Vice President, and Howard Perry, Secretary, Columbia Athletic Club³⁷³

The club held a three year lease on Analostan Island from 1889-92, paying a monthly rent of \$83.33^{1/8}.

18 October 1900 W. Mosby Williams and Arthur Peter appointed receivers³⁷⁴

District Supreme Court Justice Job Barnard appointed receivers to manage the island, pay taxes, and collect any rents. This decision stemmed from the inability of the Bradley heirs to pay back their outstanding debt, and terminated their control over the property.

1 August 1901 Blair Lee and John D. Coughlan appointed trustees³⁷⁵

On 18 October 1900, Justice Barnard also ruled that unless “a certain mortgage indebtedness” was paid by this date he would foreclose on the island and appoint trustees to secure the sale of the property. This indebtedness was not fulfilled, and the trustees took over on or around the specified date.

3 December 1909 Deed, American Colonization Society to Blair Lee and John D. Coughlan, trustees. Maria G. Dewey to same. Blair Lee et al., trustees, to William E. Davis. William E. Davis to Analostan Improvement Company³⁷⁶

³⁷² “Receiver for Island: Trustees Seek to Foreclose on Analostan Property.”

³⁷³ Shannon, “The Rambler’s Third Article on Early History of Analostan Island.”

³⁷⁴ “Analostan Island May Be Sold: Court Allows Thirty Days in Which to Pay a Mortgage.”

³⁷⁵ “Receiver for Island: Trustees Seek to Foreclose on Analostan Property.”

³⁷⁶ “Real Estate Transfers,” 3 December 1909.

The American Colonization Society, which owned one-tenth of the island by virtue of the Bradleys' debt, and Maria G. Dewey, the last surviving heir to the property, conveyed the island to the Analostan Improvement Company through the court appointed trustees and company intermediary William E. Davis. The purchase price was \$100,000.

Ca. May 1913 Deed, Analostan Improvement Company to Joseph Leiter³⁷⁷

Leiter purchased the island for approximately \$77,000, some \$23,000 less than the Analostan Improvement Company had paid for it less than four years previously.

30 November 1914 Deed, Joseph Leiter to Washington Gas Light Company³⁷⁸

Leiter, formerly president of the Washington Gas Light Company, conveyed the island to the company to be held as the potential site for a gas plant.

3 December 1931 Deed, Washington Gas Light Company to Roosevelt Memorial Association³⁷⁹

With the U.S. government preparing to condemn the island and acquire it as parkland, the Washington Gas Light Company sold the property to the Roosevelt Memorial Association for \$364,000. The government's valuation was only approximately \$200,000. The actual contract was signed in late September or early October.

27 October 1932 Deed of gift, Roosevelt Memorial Association to the United States of America³⁸⁰

The Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital accepted the gift of the island on behalf of the Federal government and the American people. The transfer was not official until 2 March 1933, when U.S. Grant, III, Director of the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks, formally received the property.

10 June 1933 Executive Order 6166³⁸¹

Effective two months later, this executive order issued by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt consolidated all Federal park activities under the National Park Service, which then took over management of Theodore Roosevelt Island.

³⁷⁷ "May Buy Analostan : Bid for Island Is Personal Says Joseph Leiter," *Washington Post*, 28 May 1913. See also Netherton, "Delicate Beauty," 55.

³⁷⁸ "Island to be Gas Plant Site: Company Gets Analostan From Mr. Leiter for That Purpose."

³⁷⁹ Netherton, "Delicate Beauty," 58, 106.

³⁸⁰ Deed of Gift, Roosevelt Memorial Association to the United States of America, 27 October 1932.

³⁸¹ Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Executive Order 6166: Organization of Executive Agencies, 10 June 1933.

B. Periods of Development

1. Original Plans and Construction

In March 1919, just two months after Theodore Roosevelt's death, a group of his close friends and colleagues formed the Roosevelt Memorial Association (RMA). The RMA received a Congressional Charter in 1920, and within two years held over \$1,700,000 in contributions, earmarked for several projects. The most important, and costly, planned undertaking was the memorialization of the late president through the erection of a monumental memorial in Washington, D.C., to rank with the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial.³⁸² In July 1921, the RMA invited a committee of sculptors, architects, and landscape architects to advise the association in choosing a design for the national memorial.³⁸³ These advisors were tasked with reporting their recommendations to an RMA committee chaired by Roosevelt cabinet members Elihu Root and James R. Garfield.³⁸⁴ With the guidance of advisory committee member Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., they first selected a vacant site in the Tidal Basin area, on axis with the Washington Monument and the White House. In January 1925, the RMA received Congressional authorization to use the Tidal Basin site in their upcoming memorial competition. Between April and early October, approximately eighteen architects, sculptors, and landscape architects submitted designs for the memorial. Architect John Russell Pope's winning design was unveiled during a public ceremony on 12 December 1925. This design, while in the neoclassical style, departed from the traditional monumental architecture of downtown Washington. In lieu of a statue or monolith, a central shaft of water rising two hundred feet in the air represented Roosevelt's indomitable spirit. This shaft, at the center of an island of white granite, was set within a circular basin flanked on the east and west by classical colonnades. The entire memorial, including landscaping, would extend some 1,940', while the U.S. Capitol Building was only 751' in length and the Washington Monument 555' tall.³⁸⁵

Pope's design was widely criticized by architects, public officials, the press corps, and private citizens, but only indirectly due to its innovative character and imposing scale. Instead, criticism centered on the site itself, and whether Roosevelt, only sixteen years removed from the presidency and dead a mere six, deserved a memorial so soon and in such an esteemed location. The RMA countered that not only was Roosevelt the equal of Washington and Lincoln, but that this great comparison was so apparent that it could be made within a brief period after his death. Hermann Hagedorn, president of the RMA, held that "just as Washington founded the Republic and Lincoln united it, so did Roosevelt consolidate and revitalize it." Elihu Root concurred. Washington was father of his country and Lincoln its savior, but through his devotion to

³⁸² Havig, 516.

³⁸³ This advisory commission consisted of architects C. Grant La Farge and Cass Gilbert, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and sculptors Herbert Adams and Lorado Taft. See Hermann Hagedorn to Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., New York, 12 July 1921, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

³⁸⁴ Root served as Roosevelt's secretary of war from 1901-04 and as secretary of state from 1905-09. Garfield served as secretary of the interior from 1907-09 and became a driving force within the association through his position as secretary. His devotion to Roosevelt's memory often verged on fanaticism, and both he and the RMA were often criticized for "the organization's uncritical approach to all that TR ever said and did." See Havig, 516-18.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 520.

Progressive politics, Roosevelt is often remembered as the president who maintained national unity in the face of class-based clashes.³⁸⁶ The general public, and more importantly Congress, doubted the validity of these assertions, and even many supporters held reservations about establishing a memorial to Roosevelt while other prominent figures, most notably Thomas Jefferson, were not adequately memorialized. Congress settled the issue in May 1926 by approving a resolution to set aside the Tidal Basin site for a future memorial to Jefferson. A principal reason behind this decision was that, regardless of whether or not Jefferson's contributions to the United States trumped Roosevelt's, they could be better evaluated due to the sense of perspective gained since Jefferson's death. The RMA was forced to seek out another site for a memorial to Roosevelt. Pope, however, also received the commission for the new Jefferson Memorial. By the time this neoclassical structure was completed in 1943, both Jefferson and Roosevelt had joined Washington and Lincoln on Mount Rushmore, proving that, at the very least, both sides of the memorialization debate held merit.

Frustrated over the loss of the initial site for the Roosevelt Memorial, the RMA began investigating the possibility of acquiring Analostan Island for this purpose. Negotiations with the owners of the island, the Washington Gas Light Company, coincided with efforts by the National Capital Park and Planning Commission (NCPPC) to condemn the island for use as regional parkland.³⁸⁷ By February 1931, the office of the attorney general was preparing to authorize the condemnation based on the island's estimated value of \$200,000 to \$250,000.³⁸⁸ These proceedings ended abruptly on 6 September when the Washington Gas Light Company accepted the RMA's offer to purchase the island for \$364,000.³⁸⁹ The purchase was made public on 13 October and the RMA formally acquired title to the island in January 1932.³⁹⁰ Congressman Robert Luce of Massachusetts summarized the memorial's concept shortly after the House of Representatives voted to approve the government's acceptance of the island from the RMA in May 1932.

*It is intended that there shall be nothing of a monumental nature erected, but that the island shall be kept as nearly as possible in a wild state, with only such ornamentation as shall not be out of harmony with that purpose . . . preserving a beautiful spot that might otherwise have been blighted by business, and fittingly testifying to the esteem in which was held one of our most beloved presidents.*³⁹¹

³⁸⁶ Ibid., 524.

³⁸⁷ "U.S. Moves to Buy Analostan Island," *Washington Star* 13 April 1927; "Developing Island Fits River Plans," *Washington Star*, 27 June 1930.

³⁸⁸ Fanning, 46; "U.S. Acts to Buy Analostan Island," *Washington Star*, 27 February 1931.

³⁸⁹ "Analostan's Sale for Memorial Is Reported Pending," *Washington Star*, 10 September 1931; "Way Cleared for Memorial to Roosevelt," *Washington Herald*, 10 September 1931; "Condemnation Suit on Island Held Up," *Washington Star* [?], 28 September 1931.

³⁹⁰ "\$364,000 Sale of Analostan Island Signed," *Washington Post*, 4 October 1931; "Analostan Island Is Officially Sold to Memorial Body," *Washington Post*, 14 October 1931; "Analostan Island Purchase Closed," *Washington Star*, 14 October 1931; "Analostan Island Sold for \$364,000," *Washington Herald*, 14 October 1931; "Analostan Title Acquired by Memorial Group: Purchase of Site for Monument to Theodore Roosevelt Completed," *Washington Star* 6 [?], January 1932.

³⁹¹ "House Approves Analostan Plan," *Washington Star*, 16 May 1932.

Theodore Roosevelt Island was to become the first living presidential memorial. Reports of a planned athletic field or stadium to honor Roosevelt as “sports lover and sports fan,” began circulating as early as 1925, but the project never progressed.³⁹² The RMA also briefly considered erecting Pope’s symbolic fountain on the new site, but that plan was quickly dropped. This new memorial was to be radically different than the first attempt. Pope’s original design, with the fountain at its centerpiece, celebrated Roosevelt as nation-healer, “the unifier of sectional and social division,” but as historian Alan Havig affirms, “it was Roosevelt the rugged outdoorsman, the hiker and camper, the naturalist and conservationist, who was best represented by the overgrown and undeveloped woods and meadows” on the island.³⁹³ The RMA was content, for the time being, to simply let the landscape itself function as a memorial. It would, however, not remain “wild” in the truest sense of the word.

Others disagreed with this concept, arguing that the condition of Theodore Roosevelt Island in the early 1930s was hardly becoming of a presidential memorial. An internal RMA document reported that it had “come to connote muddy, greasy waters, unhealthful stagnation, an isolated spot of rank undergrowth, tangled vines, poison woods, and a beaching place for canoes and row-boats after dark. An occasional newspaper article, loosely strung on half-facts and tradition, gave an unheeded reminder that the island had a history.”³⁹⁴

Seeking to improve these conditions, on 10 May 1932, the RMA hired landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and his firm Olmsted Brothers, along with architect Pope to draft a general plan for the development of the island as a national memorial to Theodore Roosevelt.³⁹⁵ While Olmsted headed this and subsequent projects on the island for the next fifteen years, he was frequently ill, and relied heavily on his associate, landscape architect Henry V. Hubbard. By the time the RMA gave the island to the Federal government in October 1932, Olmsted had already conducted field surveys, obtained an up-to-date topographic map, and collected other basic information on the island. During this early period he also began to consider how he could

³⁹² The Washington Board of Trade led an effort to build a 100,000-seat, \$5 million stadium or athletic coliseum capable of hosting major national sporting events and the Olympic Games on the island. While the board originally worked in conjunction with the RMA, it briefly and unsuccessfully continued the effort on its own following the association’s decision to abandon the stadium project due to the island’s unsuitable “geological contour.” Numerous newspaper articles focus on the proposed facility. See Clarence MacGregor, “Mr. MacGregor’s Suggestion,” letter, *Washington Post*, 22 December 1925; Don B. Reed, “Why Not a Memorial Coliseum?” *Washington Post*, 16 June 1929; “Stadium Is Urged Here As Roosevelt Memorial,” *Washington Post*, 19 November 1929; “A Roosevelt Stadium,” *Washington Post*, 6 December 1929; “Plan of Coliseum in Roosevelt Fund Project Is Started,” *Washington Star*, 4 December 1929; “Roosevelt Group Revives Memorial,” *Washington Star*, 24 March 1930; “Roosevelt Shrine for Capital City Pledged by Group,” *Washington Post*, 24 March 1930; “Reports Roosevelt Group Wants Analostan Island Confirmed,” *Washington Star*, 26 June 1930; “Development of Analostan Island,” *Evening Star*, 27 June 1930; “Analostan Stadium Plan Is Abandoned by Roosevelt Body,” *Washington Post*, 5 October 1931; “Deal for Potomac Island Expected to Be Ended Soon,” *Washington Star*, 5 October 1931; “Roosevelt Stadium Plan Is Abandoned,” *Washington Daily News*, 5 October 1931; “Analostan Island and the Roosevelt Memorial,” editorial, *Washington Times*, 7 October 1931; “Washington’s Stadium,” Editorial, *Washington Star*, 8 October 1931.

³⁹³ Havig, 530.

³⁹⁴ Roosevelt Memorial Administration, “Analostan Island,” 22 May 1930, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

³⁹⁵ Roosevelt Shrine Architects Named,” *Washington Post*, 10 May 1932.

visually link the island with other Washington, D.C., memorials.³⁹⁶ In December, Hubbard submitted to the RMA the firm's first report, which presented their overall design intent, namely that "the island should be in essence a sort of sanctuary – sacred grove – bird and (small native) wild animal sanctuary – with no through automobile traffic, at least parts of it developed in apparently natural forest and glade, as far as is consistent with intensive pedestrian use."³⁹⁷

Hubbard devoted much of the remainder of the short document to considerations relating to a feature that, only that past May, Congressman Luce specifically stated would not be included: an architectural monument. This structure was to be located on the southern end of the island and form a "composition" with the Lincoln Memorial, Arlington Memorial Bridge, Arlington House, Washington Monument, and to a lesser extent the Capitol, White House, and Key Bridge. In order to meet this arrangement, the Roosevelt Memorial would most likely need to stand on a considerable base. Hubbard conceded that while "it is impossible, except by a considerable stretch of the imagination, to create an architectural form which shall be expressive of the personality and work of Theodore Roosevelt," it must be "beautiful, impressive and monumental . . . suited to the form of its site, and . . . not already used importantly as a monument in Washington."³⁹⁸ Hubbard also concluded that a pedestrian causeway should be constructed at the northern end of the island, and that while one automobile bridge was necessary, another was not needed. Finally, he recommended filling in the low-lying portions of the island, as no proper swamp or shore marsh could be maintained, and that Little Island should be kept stripped of all trees or removed altogether so as to minimize its visual impact on the overall plan.³⁹⁹ Apart from the eventual creation of the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial in the 1960s, each of these initial recommendations were either significantly modified before being carried out or were completely abandoned.⁴⁰⁰

In January 1934, both the NCPPC and the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) "unanimously and whole-heartedly" approved the development of Theodore Roosevelt Island.⁴⁰¹ Olmsted's first priority was reducing the risk of fire, as the unkempt landscape was overspread by a highly inflammable tangle of dry weeds, brambles, and fallen deadwood resulting from years of neglect. He directed that this work begin by outlining on the ground the areas containing vegetation which was to be left undisturbed, including periwinkle and ivy groundcover, select shrubs such

³⁹⁶ Fanning, 50.

³⁹⁷ Henry V. Hubbard, "Notes On Certain Considerations Affecting the Design," 22 December 1932, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C. Regarding the proposed ban on automobiles, see also "Roosevelt Island May Be Made a Little Bermuda," *Washington Daily News*, 18 March 1933; "Potomac River Bermuda Is Promised When CCC Boys Clear Jungle Island," *Washington Daily News*, 29 August 1935.

³⁹⁸ Hubbard, "Notes On Certain Considerations Affecting the Design."

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁰ In particular, plans to fill in the large swamp-marsh area on the island's east side were almost immediately halted due to concern over the possible elimination of bird habitat. Although this "bird question" was quickly disproved, lingering apprehension on the part of U. S. Grant III, Director of Public Buildings and Public Grounds of the National Capital Region, stalled the work and it was never begun. See Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. to Herman Hagedorn, Brookline, Mass., 26 October 1933, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁰¹ Arno B. Cammerer, to Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., Washington, D.C., 23 January 1934, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

as viburnums and hazel, a specific clump of sumac, grapevines, and all the living trees of considerable size, and even small trees of “good promise.” The species comprising Olmsted’s “black list,” i.e. weeds to be completely eradicated, were chiefly Japanese honeysuckle, blackberry, sumac, Joe-Pye-weed, poison ivy, and other coarse herbaceous weeds and grasses. Seedling elms and locusts, about man-height or less, when mixed in with weeds, were to be removed as well. When the weeds occurred in large, wide-open spaces well away from trees and desirable vegetation, the entire area was to be cleaned down to the bare dirt. Where the weeds were intermixed with the protected species, more specific removals were necessary. Olmsted concluded that in addition to reducing “the great present fire hazard . . . until these encumbering masses of deadwood and weeds have been removed, wise conclusions in regard to many features of a comprehensive general plan for the ultimate development of the island can hardly be reached with confidence.”⁴⁰²

A small portion of the island had been cleared by February 1934,⁴⁰³ and further work was underway by 16 May 1934, when Olmsted submitted a draft of his general plan for Theodore Roosevelt Island to the RMA.⁴⁰⁴ This twelve-page report formed the basis for all subsequent landscape work carried out on the island. Olmsted began by expanding the firm’s 1932 statement of intent. He now considered his primary objective to be the creation of a mature, native forest modeled after that which he believed would have naturally evolved on the island without human interference. He viewed this landscape treatment as the most stable, aesthetically pleasing, and appropriate to commemorating Theodore Roosevelt. In his words:

Covering most of the Island, and constituting its dominant landscape feature, there should be developed steadily and progressively through the years and centuries to come a real forest closely similar in character to the natural primaeval forests which once covered this and others of the Potomac islands.

The primaeval forests native to this part of America – “climax forests” the ecologists call them as representing a condition of enduring stability and unity of character reached through a long process of evolutionary change and thereafter remaining, for centuries without number, essentially unaltered through all changes of detail – had also an esthetic unity and nobility and enduring permanence of beautiful qualities that made them one of nature’s most inspiring and enduring masterpieces, comparable only with the very greatest of the works of art produced by man.

With skillful yet entirely self-subordinating and humble-minded aid from man, nature can be induced to recreate, here on its native site, with almost equal perfection, the very sort of climax forest full of enduring and noble dignity and unity of character in combination with immense variety and richness of beautiful detail, and to do so within a span of years

⁴⁰² Frederic Law Olmsted, Jr. to Arno B. Cammerer, Brookline, Mass., 17 January 1934, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.; Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., “Roosevelt Island: Memorandum for Mr. Finnan in Regard to Suggested Cleaning and Weeding,” 5 February 1934, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁰³ “Roosevelt Island to Become Park.”

⁴⁰⁴ Either Olmsted never completed a final draft, or it has since been lost.

far shorter than unaided nature would require to again evolve the veritably primaeval forest stripped away by man.

It is clear to us that no other aim in respect to the landscape quality of the island in the years to come give so great assurance of unity and enduring stability in the esthetic qualities of the island as a memorial, or would be so appropriate for commemorating the personality and interests of the man Theodore Roosevelt.

*The island has today noble forest remnants, especially along its western side, strongly suggestive of the desired character. On most of it the old clearings have been overspread by a second-growth of smaller trees which, although very different in its composition and present character from a primaeval forest, at least provides a sylvan character to start with. Under persistent, well-directed management, by the addition of young plants of the species that it lacks and the gradual weeding out of existing trees of kinds that are undesirable and overabundant, the present woodland can be slowly and gradually developed, without any sudden and conspicuous change, into as noble a forest as the first white settlers found here.*⁴⁰⁵

Olmsted continued with a description of the most significant open space present on the island, what he termed the outlook terrace just south of the Mason house ruins.⁴⁰⁶ This position on the island's ridge afforded "superb views" of the Lincoln Memorial, Arlington Memorial Bridge, and beyond. He instructed that it "be treated in mainly open turf and other low growth, with only such few trees as would definitely enhance the effect of these views." Furthermore, if in the future a monumental structure in honor of Roosevelt was to be erected, Olmsted considered the outlook terrace the ideal location, "both in respect to the visual relation of such a memorial to the other great monumental structures in the neighborhood of the island and in respect to the relation of the site to the rest of the island."⁴⁰⁷

At least as early as 1935, Olmsted also began to consider locating permanent visitor amenities, such as a shelter and toilets, on the island's north end.⁴⁰⁸ However, while he acknowledged that such facilities, as well as convenient public access to the island, were essential design components, Olmsted also felt that it was "equally essential to the dignity and effectiveness of an island forest such as is proposed that as far as possible there be emphasis upon the quality of isolation or seclusion proper alike to a forest and to a memorial island." In his estimation, the forest's "essential qualities" could not be fully appreciated and enjoyed except at the slow, leisurely pace one enjoys while walking or on horseback. He believed, therefore, "that access to the island by bridge should be definitely barred to general automobile traffic, although provision

⁴⁰⁵ Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., "Draft of Preliminary Report upon a Plan for the Permanent Development of Roosevelt Island," 16 May 1934, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁰⁶ The outlook terrace was the most common name for this landscape feature, but it was also sometimes referred to as the outlook point, outlook plateau, and overlook terrace.

⁴⁰⁷ Olmsted, Jr., "Draft of Preliminary Report upon a Plan for the Permanent Development of Roosevelt Island."

⁴⁰⁸ Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, "Roosevelt Memorial Island, Washington, D.C.: Notes to Accompany Plan No.," Brookline, Mass, 29 May 1935, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

must be made for the occasional admission of service vehicles to the paths of the island.” He envisioned “narrow bridges, essentially like foot-bridges in appearance,” connecting the northern and southern ends of the island to the Virginia shore, as well as a small harbor at the southern tip for the use of small boats. Due to high height requirements mandated by the War Department, conventional bridges across the Little River would need to rise high enough to clear the maximum possible flood levels. Olmsted felt that while such a bridge might be appropriate for the northern crossing, “to construct such a permanent bridge under such requirements at the southern end of the Island would bring it squarely into comparison, if not into competition, with the [Arlington] Memorial Bridge,” and in general “produce a wholly unsatisfactory appearance.” The forested island was to be the focus, and the bridges “simple, unpretentious, incidental structures quite devoid of monumental character.”⁴⁰⁹ Given the requirements, Olmsted emphatically favored the use of a modest pontoon footbridge to the south, and considered constructing one to the north as well.

In general, Olmsted favored changing the island’s natural surface grade as little as possible, while disguising circulation routes so as to appear as natural occurrences rather than deliberate creations. Likewise, he stressed the “smoothing out” of what he termed “minor scars resulting from former human uses.” These undesirable features included traces of the Columbia Athletic Association’s racetrack, old roads, and, most notably, the Mason mansion. According to Olmsted, these sites held

*a certain kind of interest from the point of view of local history; but so far as we are yet informed there is no historic interest or sentiment attaching to any of them of sufficient importance to make their obliteration a seriously objectionable matter. And certainly to make a definite point of preserving them would tend to associate the island with sentiments more or less competitive with its primary memorial sentiment and with the general conception of approximating the landscape of the woodlands to that of a natural primaeval forest. It would seem best, therefore, to take down the upstanding parts of the ruins and to obliterate or obscure most of the other traces of former human occupancy. Similarly the few conspicuously exotic and “gardenesque” trees such as Catalpas and Paulownias ought to be weeded out, as long-lived native forest trees are grown to take their places.*⁴¹⁰

Olmsted, however, made two specific concessions in this plan to remove the evidence of former human occupation. In his estimation, periwinkle and English ivy, two introduced, non-native species, were “so agreeable in themselves and relatively so unassertive that they should be preserved rather than removed.”⁴¹¹

Olmsted also addressed a variety of additional topics throughout his 1934 report. Although weeding was well underway, the removal of Japanese honeysuckle quickly became a particular nuisance. The vine had run wild over much of the island, strangling, suffocating and killing many of the young trees, and was so firmly established that Olmsted directed its control and

⁴⁰⁹ Olmsted, Jr., “Draft of Preliminary Report upon a Plan for the Permanent Development of Roosevelt Island.”

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹¹ Ibid.

removal as the necessary first step toward the development of the climax forest. He also proposed filling in the marshy area along the east coast, and stabilizing all of the weak points along the island's banks. While the simplest means of carrying out the latter objective would be to dredge out the banks to below low-water mark and then construct a rigid retaining wall, Olmsted discounted this treatment as "distressingly out of character with the picturesque and irregular naturalness of the forest margin."⁴¹² Instead, he called for the construction of a rock wall, composed of irregular rocks of relatively large size, so as to simulate a natural shore. Olmsted concluded by listing the types of trees appropriate for future planting. Tulip poplars, oaks (both of the white oak and black oak group), plane-trees, river birches, sweet gums, maples, ash, hickories, and elms constituted the primary plantings, as they dominated the forests he sought to emulate. Trees of secondary importance, i.e. those present in fewer numbers within the native Potomac forests, included the evergreen magnolia, sassafras, persimmons, locusts, dogwoods, redbuds, pines, and hemlocks.⁴¹³

Over the next year, the preparatory work of weeding and removing dead vegetation progressed largely without incident,⁴¹⁴ and by mid-June 1935, the CCC crews had cleared about two-thirds of the island.⁴¹⁵ Olmsted Brothers also drafted two planting plans for his climax forest in preparation for the upcoming reforestation. The first, dated 29 May 1935, includes seven pages of notes, listing in detail which species should be planted in each of twenty-eight areas.⁴¹⁶ Unfortunately, the accompanying map was not present at the Library of Congress, and it is therefore not possible to determine the boundaries of these areas. The second plan, drafted two weeks later, mentions few individual species, but rather focuses on more general landscape characteristics such as overall appearance, use, density, and scenic vistas. Although considerably less detailed than the first, the second plan also contains a map with which to inform the accompanying notes (Appendix 1).

Using these plans as guides, the CCC crews began planting in October 1935, with the aim of completing the work on the central portion of the island, that area from the hill top at the site of the ruins to the northerly edge of the upland plateau, and from the west shore to the marshland on the east, by the end of March 1936.⁴¹⁷ Elsewhere, planting was put on hold, awaiting further

⁴¹² Ibid.

⁴¹³ Ibid.

⁴¹⁴ The only significant setback during this initial phase occurred in June 1934, when at least one CCC crew also mistakenly removed the foliage from desirable trees and shrubs. Frustrated, Olmsted again stressed his overall vision of "a 'thickety' wild forest in which one will seldom be able to see very far ahead in most directions, and which will look as though no man-axe had ever touched it." He also warned his supervisors that if they were not able to follow his instructions, they would be replaced. See Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., "Roosevelt Island: Memorandum for Mr. Fahey," 11 June 1934, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴¹⁵ Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., "Theodore Roosevelt Island: Outline of Projected Improvement Work by the C.C.C. for the Period Ending March 31, 1936, in Pursuance of the General Plan Set Forth in the Report of May, 1934, and Approved in Principle by the Roosevelt Memorial Association and the Commission of Fine Arts: As Explained to and Approved by the Executive Committee of the Association on June 7th, 1935," 15 June 1935, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴¹⁶ Olmsted Brothers, "Roosevelt Memorial Island, Washington, D.C.: Notes to Accompany Plan No."

⁴¹⁷ Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, "Report to the Roosevelt Memorial Association on the Design and Progress of Work on Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, D.C.," 24 October 1935, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

progress in planning and construction. Authorized work, however, proceeded at a fast pace. From the fall of 1935 through March 1936, the crews continued to remove deadwood and weeds (Figure 18), laid thousands of feet of trails and bridle paths, made minor grade changes, and developed “forest improvement plantations.”⁴¹⁸ These “improvements,” Olmsted’s term for the plantings, comprised three basic purposes: to fill in the existing remnants of old woodlands with “young trees of large-growing forest species appropriate to the locality,” to add “flowering dogwoods and other small-growing native forest trees for enrichment and diversification,” and to “add forest undergrowth shrubs where desirable for obtaining the appearance of intricacy characteristic of natural forests” while limiting undesirable views. Within this framework, Olmsted stressed the importance of planting trees of various sizes, so as to “avoid an appearance of artificial monotony.”⁴¹⁹ His entire goal, after all, was to make it appear as if the landscape had naturally evolved (Figure 19). Thousands of trees, all the same height, all planted together, would have looked more like a nursery than a primeval forest.

Also in October 1935, Olmsted reversed his decision to fill in the marsh, owing to the great expense of securing the amount of material necessary to raise it above flood level.⁴²⁰ Couching the situation in positive terms, an Olmsted Brothers report touted the virtues of maintaining the marsh as an undisturbed bird and animal habitat. This issue had been discussed at length during the previous years, but the firm always considered preserving the habitat a lower priority than increasing the amount of usable land for the forest scheme. Now that financial necessity dictated a change, the landscape architects quickly revised their position.⁴²¹

Likewise, while Hubbard originally recommended clear-cutting or completely removing Little Island in order to lessen its visual impact, Olmsted instead chose to realize its potential as “good landscape foreground” for views from Theodore Roosevelt Island. He proposed that it be used as a secondary picnic area, and maintained as additional wildlife habitat. By October 1935, Little Island was being developed with these goals in mind, with special attention paid to “preserving

⁴¹⁸ Olmsted anticipated laying 10,900’ of trails and 3,400’ of bridle paths before 31 March 1936. See Olmsted, Jr., “Theodore Roosevelt Island: Outline of Projected Improvement Work by the C.C.C.”

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

⁴²⁰ One of the principal reasons that Olmsted and Hubbard originally favored filling in the marsh was the large amount of available material on hand a recent dredging of the Potomac River. U. S. Grant III, then Director of Public Buildings and Public Parks, stalled the project over concerns raised by the CFA and Edith Carrow Roosevelt (Theodore’s widow) as to the loss of bird habitat. With assurances from Grant that fill material would remain available, Olmsted was “entirely content to have the decision remain open for a couple of years longer.” By the fall of 1935, however, this fill was no longer available and the project never resumed. See, Olmsted to Hagedorn, 26 October 1933.

⁴²¹ By October 1933, Olmsted had consulted Dr. Theodore S. Palmer of the U.S. Biological Survey regarding the necessity of preserving the low-lying marsh lands as bird habitat. Palmer stated that he “could not recommend an attempt to retain them for the sake of the birds.” While Olmsted deferred to Director Grant’s decision to temporarily suspend the project, and was aware of growing pressure by the Roosevelt family to assure the island remained “hospitable to birds,” he seems to have essentially considered it a foregone conclusion that filling would eventually occur. Regarding Palmer, see Olmsted to Hagedorn, 26 October 1933. Regarding the Roosevelt family, see Hermann Hagedorn to Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., New York, N.Y., 19 January 1934, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

and improving the large trees to the west and south, and leaving a fairly dense grove of smaller growth along the east side.”⁴²²

Olmsted’s outlook terrace formed the heart of his overall landscape design. This stone platform, to be constructed a short distance from the Mason house ruins on the regraded southern tip of the island’s upland plateau, would serve as a place for visitors to enjoy sweeping views south to the Mall and down the river, “thus dramatizing Roosevelt’s relation to the greater Washington pantheon of American heroes.”⁴²³ The outlook was planned as a rounded terrace, formed by a retaining wall constructed of native stone, crowned with a low parapet and terminating in steps at the east and west sides. A carefully graded slope below the wall would have led to new plantings that were intended to create a gradual transition between the natural forest and formal overlook. Visitors would arrive at the terrace from the north or by paths leading up from a shelter and ferry landing at the island’s southern tip.⁴²⁴ Views of the Georgetown shoreline, highly industrial at the time, were to be blocked by dense vegetation. This screening effect would have further directed the visitor’s attention to the planned views of the National Mall, Arlington Memorial Bridge, Arlington House, and the Potomac River, while at the same time reinforcing the island’s wilderness experience.

Meanwhile, the debate that had begun almost immediately after the RMA purchased the island, whether or not to include a formal memorial to Theodore Roosevelt in their overall design plans, continued on. The CFA and NCPPC quickly entered this discussion as well, but by 1935 all parties agreed to follow Olmsted’s recommendation that if such a monument was to be constructed, it should be located on the outlook plateau. Olmsted, however, removed himself from the actual debate.⁴²⁵ Instead, he concentrated on developing a plan for the outlook that was complete in and of itself, but would also accommodate the addition of the memorial with only minor alterations to the site’s layout and plantings. Nonetheless, Olmsted eventually came to believe that he was “unduly optimistic” in his initial assessment, that these two goals could not be reconciled, and that the issue of whether or not to include the memorial was the fundamental choice regarding the development of the outlook plateau. If no such structure was to be included, he envisioned a lush treatment featuring many trees, but if the memorial was added later, most of these trees would have to be removed. Faced with this impasse, Olmsted wrote to Pope on 23 June 1935, and confessed that “no good compromise or combination of these alternatives now seems to me to be possible.”⁴²⁶ By October 1938, the paths, and possibly the grading, of the south plateau were essentially completed, but the matter of the outlook terrace was still unresolved, and would remain so until the late 1950s. This indecision essentially settled the matter. Olmsted and the RMA were simply unwilling to invest significant time and resources in a project that might be obliterated within a few years. Development of the terrace never really began in earnest, and funding problems throughout the 1940s delayed even the creation of a planting plan for the southern end of the island until 1945.

⁴²² Olmsted Brothers, “Report to the Roosevelt Memorial Association.”

⁴²³ Fanning, 54.

⁴²⁴ Olmsted Brothers, “Report to the Roosevelt Memorial Association.”

⁴²⁵ Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. to John Russell Pope, Brookline, Mass., 23 June 1935, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴²⁶ Ibid.

Olmsted also faced a challenge from preservationists over his decision for the treatment of the Mason house ruins. Both he and the RMA favored the complete removal of all indications of previous human inhabitation of the island. In the words of RMA Director Hermann Hagedorn:

*The Association's request that the ruins of the Mason house be removed was based on the belief of the trustees that their purpose in purchasing the Island and presenting it as a memorial to Theodore Roosevelt would be imperfectly fulfilled if the area were to be allowed to remain a memorial also to the Mason family. It seemed essential to the trustees, and to the administration authorities involved, that the memorial character of the Island must not be blurred. The Island could not be nine-tenths a memorial to Theodore Roosevelt and one-tenth a memorial to General John Mason or his son.*⁴²⁷

Hagedorn thought of the Mason era as only an “incidental issue,” and the desire by some parties to maintain the house ruins as “purely sentimental.” He and the RMA did not believe that John Mason was an important enough historical figure to warrant preservation. He claimed:

*The trustees would have come to the same conclusion, I am sure, if the builder of the original house had been the great George Mason himself. But as you know it was not George Mason who built it but an inconspicuous officer of the militia whose only claim to notice is that he was the son of a man who helped to create the nation and the father of another who did what he could to destroy it. The fact that the Confederate diplomat who sought to persuade England to smash the Union, happened to be born on the Island does not seem to me a good reason to make the Island, even partially, a memorial to him. I can hear Theodore Roosevelt snorting at the idea of being asked to share memorial honors with a man who sought foreign aid to destroy his country.*⁴²⁸

Conversely, historians, architects, and preservationists mounted a concerted effort to protect the ruins, or even rebuild the house. This opposition surfaced as early as January 1933, when NCPPC consulting architect W. T. Partridge advocated integrating the site into the island's overall landscape design.

*The old Mason House on the high spot can be rebuilt and should be as it is a historic spot. Terrace gardens can be planned to descend to the memorial level [the outlook terrace]. The treatment of this house and surroundings can be an intermediate step between the formal surroundings of the memorial and the informal treatment desirable for the balance of the island.*⁴²⁹

The Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) were involved with activities on the island by at least February 1934, when Mrs. Alfred Ball Garges delivered a paper on its history.⁴³⁰ She did

⁴²⁷ Hermann Hagedorn to Rev. Anson Phelps Stokes, New York, N.Y., 14 August 1936, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

⁴²⁹ W. T. Partridge, “Memorandum for Mr. Eliot, Subject: Roosevelt Memorial,” 18 January 1933, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴³⁰ “Dolly Madison Chapter, D.A.R., Meets with Mrs. R. P. Barnard,” *Washington Post*, 25 February 1934.

so again at least once more, in March 1935.⁴³¹ Between these two readings, C. Marshall Finnan, superintendent of the National Capital Parks, authorized “copying [of] valuable records of Analostan Island” for use by the DAR, and Bessie W. Gahn visited the island and gave an illustrated presentation of her “discoveries” to her fellow members.⁴³² These activities seem to have been undertaken in opposition to the upcoming plans to demolish the Mason house ruins. In addition to her DAR activities, Gahn was also employed as secretary to Department of Agriculture botanist Dr. Frederick V. Coville, who advised Olmsted Brothers during their reforestation work. According to the firm’s records, Gahn used this opportunity to express her wish that the Mason mansion would not be destroyed, and that she was “giving vent to a popular feeling that these ruins ought to be retained.” The Olmsted Brothers’ representative, Hans Kohler, noted “she seemed to know a good deal about the history of the Island,” and “I thought it a good opportunity to get in a little missionary work with her thinking that she might talk with other people about the goings on over at the island.”⁴³³ Apparently Kohler was unsuccessful in his efforts, as on 15 April 1935, Hermann Hagedorn wrote to Olmsted:

*I am a little disturbed by the agitation of certain Colonial daughters and such to preserve the ruins of the Mason house. There is danger of real interference with our plans, I think, unless the ruins are quietly demolished soon . . . It seems to me that the best thing would be to have the ruins demolished this summer when the Colonial ladies are on vacation and Congress is not in session. Or the work might quietly be done now.*⁴³⁴

Olmsted and the RMA succeeded in evading this public opposition and moved forward with their plans to raze the ruins. Prior to the start of demolition, in February 1936, a team from the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) was assembled to document the existing conditions at the site and conduct limited archeological excavations. Architect Stuart Barnette headed the team, while a CCC crew performed the site work. Prior to the start of the fieldwork, Barnette and historian O. F. Northington, Jr. authored a memorandum outlining their recommendations on procedures to follow during the project, and also expressing concerns about demolishing such an important site.

*Aside from its historical associations, the Mason House deserves a prominent place in the records of the development of a truly American style of architecture. The building represents not only the first steps in independent initiative in American architectural design but offers concrete evidence that our infant republic was a leader, rather than a follower, in the classical revival.*⁴³⁵

⁴³¹ “Martha Washington Chapter Gets Data for Archives,” *Washington Post*, 17 March 1935.

⁴³² “D.A.R. History Chairman Gives Year’s Plans: Valuable Data on Analostan Copied,” *Washington Post*, 28 October 1934; “D.A.R. Chapter Activities,” *Washington Post*, 20 January 1935.

⁴³³ Hans Kohler, “Roosevelt Memorial Island, Washington, D.C.: Report of Site Visits of Nov. 14, 15, 1934,” Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴³⁴ Hermann Hagedorn to Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., New York, N.Y., 15 April 1935, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴³⁵ O. F. Northington, Jr. and Stuart M. Barnette to Verne Chatelain, Fredericksburg, Va., “Subject: Mason House Ruins on Analostan Island,” 19 March 1936, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

The pair concluded with a request that “an appropriate marker which will present effectively the history and original appearance of the house be erected.”⁴³⁶ No such marker has ever been installed.

The excavations were conducted without the supervision of a trained archeologist, and while prehistoric, colonial, and nineteenth-century artifacts were all discovered, their provenience was not established and the documentation proved woefully inadequate. Many or most artifacts, including some architectural fragments, were subsequently reburied in a concrete vault located somewhere within the perimeter of the house foundations.⁴³⁷ The HABS team also documented the above and below-ground remains of the mansion, icehouse, well, retaining walls, terraces, and three outbuildings (Figures 5 and 6). Their work resulted in a written report (HABS DC-28) containing a brief history of the island, written description of the house site, large-format documentary photographs, and architectural drawings.

The excavations caused Olmsted considerable alarm, as the CCC workers repeatedly cut the roots of important trees.⁴³⁸ Given the damage already done by the HABS team, in December 1936, Olmsted revised his original position on the total removal of the ruins, as this “would require stripping an acre or so of its entire existing canopy of forest trees; which is too large a price to pay.”⁴³⁹ Instead, he issued instructions to disguise the site as much as possible while not harming the trees. He sought to remove the largest wall fragments, remove or bury segments of lower walls, and reduce the rigidity of the artificial terrace banks. His overall goal was

*not that of an attempt completely to “restore” the primitive natural conditions of the area – a process of “nature faking” – and certainly not that of an attempt to “restore” the Mason House and its once celebrated gardens, or even to preserve, protect, and draw attention to their existing remains, incongruously conspicuous as they are now in a woodland landscape dedicated to its present purpose, but rather to accelerate the approach of inconspicuousness, such as these or any such remnants of relatively unimportant human structures fall into when abandoned long enough to the forces of nature in a region reconquered by forest.*⁴⁴⁰

Although Olmsted’s overall vision for the development of the mansion house site and the island as a whole were clearly defined and well recorded, surviving documentation often offers little insight into details of the actual work. Even the date(s) on which he carried out his plan to reduce the Mason house ruins has not survived, although it was likely sometime in early 1937, as work slowed significantly as the year went on. Likewise, while the plans of 29 May and 15 June 1935 give a comprehensive description of which species were to be located in different sections of the

⁴³⁶ Ibid.

⁴³⁷ Fanning, 53.

⁴³⁸ Hans Koehler, “Roosevelt Island: Report of Visit, June 17-18, 1936,” Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴³⁹ Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., “Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, D.C.: Report of Visit November 30th to December 3rd, 1936,” 8 December 1936, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

island, they do not include the numbers of individual plants. However, according to a 29 October 1936 requisition submitted by CCC foreman H. A. Hubler, and annotated by Henry V. Hubbard, approximately 5,300 plants comprising thirty-three different species had been planted by this time, and an additional 20,198 were planned for, bringing the projected total to about 25,500.⁴⁴¹ The majority of the work was that carried out on the central portion of the island between October 1935 and March 1936. Subsequent on-the-ground efforts were concentrated to the north, east, and west, as detailed plans had not yet been developed due to the ongoing memorialization debate. However, a basic plan for the south end of the island, featuring a boat landing and shelter, was completed ca. 1937 (Figure 20).

On 7 November 1937, the *New York Times* reported that 20,000 native hardwood trees had been planted, and that “Theodore Roosevelt Island has assumed the appearance of a forest primeval such as the Indians knew when they roamed over what is now the nation’s capital.”⁴⁴² Given that the requisition included the eventual planting of over 12,000 shrubs, ferns, and herbaceous plants in its 25,500 projected plantings, the newspaper article seems to have inflated the actual number of trees planted. Regardless of the composition, CCC crews planted or transplanted a total of 35,736 native plants, with the majority completed before everyday work on the island ceased around the end of 1937.⁴⁴³ C. Marshall Finnan, then Commissioner of the National Capital Parks, hoped that the island would be open for “limited use as a recreation area” by the spring of 1938, but official dedication was delayed several years.⁴⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the public seems to have begun visiting by the late 1930s.⁴⁴⁵

On 1 July 1941, Hagedorn wrote to Olmsted, informing him that the RMA was strongly considering approving a memorial to Theodore Roosevelt. The plan was for a large monumental lion, a familiar symbol of Theodore Roosevelt, based on a plan created twenty years previously by Carl Akeley.⁴⁴⁶ Akeley felt that “the Lion should be carved out of granite and be about thirty-six feet long and some fifteen feet high.”⁴⁴⁷ As Akeley had died in 1926, Hagedorn was considering sculptor James Earle Fraser for the project, who seemed “excited” about the idea.⁴⁴⁸

⁴⁴¹ Hubler, “Plant Materials Required to Complete Planting Roosevelt Island.”

⁴⁴² “Wild Park Made to Honor T. R.” *New York Times*, 7 November 1937.

⁴⁴³ Given the requisition for about 25,500 new plantings it is reasonable to conclude that the remainder of the 35,736 plants were transplants. This number is 10,236.

⁴⁴⁴ “Roosevelt Island to Open in Spring,” *Washington Post*, 17 December 1936.

⁴⁴⁵ Fanning, 55.

⁴⁴⁶ Akeley was a conservationist, photographer, sculptor, artist, and biologist who is noted for his many contributions to American museums. As a taxidermist, he was the first to develop a method for mounting museum displays to show animals in their natural surroundings and fix them in lifelike poses. This work led naturally to sculpture. Many of his most prominent pieces are housed at the Chicago Field Museum, including a large bronze lion that may have been created from the model he furnished the RMA. Akeley also personally knew Theodore Roosevelt and accompanied him on his 1909 African expedition. Akeley himself participated in five expeditions to Africa, dying of a fever while in Congo in November 1926. For more information on Akeley, see Penelope Bodry-Sanders, *African Obsession: The Life and Legacy of Carl Akeley* (Jacksonville: Batax Museum Publishing, 1998).

⁴⁴⁷ Hermann Hagedorn to Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., New York, N.Y., 1 July 1941, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid. Fraser was a well-respected American Beau-Arts sculptor who completed many public monuments in Washington, D.C., including the John Erickson National Memorial, *The Peaceful Arts, Music & Harvest* and *Aspiration & Literature*, the architrave of the National Archives building, and the statues of Alexander Hamilton

Olmsted agreed that the lion was an interesting idea, but recollected that “Akeley’s conception of a proper setting for it was a glade in the midst of woods, shut in by the trees on all sides, and with the ground rising gently from the lion to the surrounding woods from three sides at least – quite a different condition than that at the southern high point of the island.”⁴⁴⁹ The fact that the open arena of the outlook terrace was indeed so different may explain why the statue was never authorized.

No new work was completed on Theodore Roosevelt Island until the early 1950s, although Olmsted, the RMA, and the NPS continued to apply for funding and to solicit support for continued development. Many NPS officials who had supported the project left Washington, the CCC camp was relocated, and work came to a standstill.⁴⁵⁰ In 1941, the office of the National Capital Parks requested \$115,000 to build various structures, but this was rejected in favor of military expenditures due to the commencement of World War II.⁴⁵¹ During the war, government agencies, including the Office of Strategic Services, are said to have used the island as a training site for their agents.⁴⁵² Sometime prior to 4 June 1943, the War Department constructed temporary pontoon bridges linking the north end of the island with Georgetown and the Virginia shore, and cleared a connecting road across the island for emergency use.⁴⁵³ While Olmsted took this route, it is unclear whether these bridges were open to the general public or were reserved for governmental use. The Army also made a “cut” at the northern end of the island for access to the pontoon bridge. Although it was never used, this approach altered conditions to such an extent that Assistant National Capital Parks Superintendent Harry Thompson recommended ordering a revised topographical map showing “what it is that we now have to deal with in this place.”⁴⁵⁴ The War Department removed the pontoon bridges in 1945, after which it planned to also remove the connecting road and restore the area “to its original condition both in terms of topography and planting.”⁴⁵⁵

and Albert Gallatin outside the United States Treasury. In 1940 he sculpted an equestrian statue of Theodore Roosevelt for New York’s American Museum of Natural History. See Joseph F. Morris, *James Earle Fraser* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1955).

⁴⁴⁹ Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. to Hermann Hagedorn, Elkton, Md., 14 July 1941, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁵⁰ Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. to Hermann Hagedorn, Brookline, Mass., 19 June 1941, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁵¹ Irving C. Root to Hermann Hagedorn, Washington, D.C., 20 June 1941, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁵² Federal Bureau of Investigation agents were also reportedly trained on the island during the early 1950s. See James G. Deane, “T. R.’s Admirers Take Up His Big Stick,” *Washington Star*, 28 February 1952. Chairman Bilbo of the Senate District Subcommittee also proposed that the island be redeveloped as a playground for the District’s children. The senator was quoted as saying that “since Congress does not let District residents vote, it should let them play.” The proposal, however, was never seriously considered.

⁴⁵³ Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., “Theodore Roosevelt Island: Memorandum Report of Visit by F. L. Olmsted,” 4 June 1943, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁵⁴ Henry V. Hubbard to Harry T. Thompson, Brookline, Mass., 13 July 1945, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁵⁵ Office of the National Capital Parks to Henry V. Hubbard, Washington, D.C., 20 July 1945, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

In May 1945, Olmsted Brothers submitted a sketch for the proposed boat landing and shelter at the southern tip of the island (Figure 21) and in May the firm completed their final *General Plan* for Theodore Roosevelt Island. Unlike previous plans, it included a development scheme for the outlook terrace, boat landings, and several support structures, many of which were to be built on the island's north end.⁴⁵⁶ That November, the firm received a tentative funding agreement to design a rain shelter to the north, a comfort station with restrooms to the south, and a boat landing at the far southern tip. Development plans also continued for the outlook terrace, but plans to include a caretaker's quarters on the island were dropped.⁴⁵⁷ Olmsted and Hubbard had been planning to include basic visitor amenities on the island since at least May 1935.⁴⁵⁸ Early on they considered replicating Roosevelt's cabin at Elkhorn Ranch,⁴⁵⁹ but quickly rejected the idea, stating that "a simple structure, in character with the site and designed for the purpose it is intended to fulfil [sic], would, on the whole, prove more satisfactory, even though it might be deficient in sentimental value."⁴⁶⁰ Olmsted Brothers retained architect Charles R. Wait to prepare plans for the structures. By May 1946, he had developed a perspective drawing for the shelter, was in consultation with project engineers over the granite substructure of the ferry landing, and reported that the comfort station was "all designed, and details made."⁴⁶¹

Wait submitted detailed specifications and drawings to Olmsted Brothers during January and February 1947.⁴⁶² Meanwhile, the firm continued with their own specifications for the outlook terrace.⁴⁶³ Final deliverables were likely completed by May, and submitted to the office of the National Capital Parks for approval in June. While Olmsted Brothers managed the design of the structures and terrace, the NPS held responsibility for their actual construction and subsequent

⁴⁵⁶ See sheet 2, box 5.

⁴⁵⁷ In addition to the caretaker's quarters, plans for a north boat landing, service yard, and garage also seem to have been abandoned at this time, and restroom facilities removed here as well. See Hermann Hagedorn to Henry V. Hubbard, New York, N.Y., 5 November 1945, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁵⁸ Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, "Roosevelt Memorial Island, Washington, D.C.: Notes to Accompany Plan No."

⁴⁵⁹ Although Olmsted Brothers specifically referred to the Elkhorn, they almost certainly misidentified the cabin. The 30' x 60' structure was the centerpiece of Roosevelt's second homestead in the Dakota Territory, and only stood for some ten years until it was torn down in 1890s and the lumber recycled for nearby buildings. Roosevelt's first, and much smaller, "Maltese Cross" cabin, built 1884-85, is still extant and is of a more reasonable size to have been considered for the island. See U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, *Maltese Cross Cabin*, (Medora, N.Dak.: Theodore Roosevelt National Park, 2007), <http://www.nps.gov/thro/historyculture/maltese-cross-cabin.htm> (accessed 7 August 2007).

⁴⁶⁰ Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the Roosevelt Memorial Association."

⁴⁶¹ Charles R. Wait to Henry V. Hubbard, Boston, Mass., 21 May 1946, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁶² Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, and Charles A. Wait, "Specifications for Boat Landing," 11 January 1947, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.; Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, and Charles A. Wait, "Specifications for Shelter," 11 January 1947, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.; Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, and Charles A. Wait, "Specifications for Boat Landing," February 1947, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁶³ Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, and Charles A. Wait, "Specifications for Overlook Terrace," 6 June 1947, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

management.⁴⁶⁴ Due to funding deficiencies, this construction would not begin in earnest for another eight years.

In June 1947, Olmsted Brothers sent the RMA specifications for the outlook terrace and support structures, as well as twenty-five additional sheets of plans concerning all aspects of the island's development.⁴⁶⁵ Their primary purpose was to create a complete, up-to-date repository of their work during the past fifteen years. As the firm stated:

*The purpose of assembling these plans and specifications at this time is not, it is understood, because construction can be immediately undertaken. On the contrary, since construction, in part at least, may be long postponed, it was decided to complete the record of present decisions on which all responsibility concerned are generally agreed, so that whenever the work was undertaken no part of the present carefully considered total picture should be lost, or changed unless new circumstances, as carefully and comprehensively considered as the present have been, should necessitate such a change.*⁴⁶⁶

They also reiterated the overall design intent:

The whole island is a permanent memorial to a great man.

The character of the island is ultimately to be set by the character of its vegetation – that of a natural “climax forest”.

*The human uses of the land are to be restricted – in kind, in amount, and in location – to those which are compatible with the intended effect of the island as a whole and with the physical requirements of its maintenance and guidance towards perfection of its intended kind. This decision influences all the following considerations.*⁴⁶⁷

The RMA gave their final approval of these plans in July 1947,⁴⁶⁸ and the NPS concurred and agreed to retain Olmsted Brothers in future development projects, “at such time as funds are made available to carry them to completion.”⁴⁶⁹ Thus far, Olmsted had accomplished only a portion of his overall vision for Theodore Roosevelt Island. The southern portion of the island was still unplanted, no visitor amenities had been built, and without the benefit of a bridge or ferry service the only access to the island was by private boat. Certainly most disheartening to Olmsted, the outlook terrace had not advanced beyond the planning stages, continually delayed over the indecision surrounding a future monumental structure honoring Roosevelt. But much

⁴⁶⁴ Fanning, 55.

⁴⁶⁵ Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects to Gen. Frank R. McCoy, Brookline, Mass., 13 June 1947, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁸ Frank McCoy to Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, 14 July 1947, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁶⁹ A. E. Demaray to Frank R. McCoy, Washington, D.C., 5 August 1947, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

had been accomplished. Under Olmsted's direction, the RMA had succeeded in creating the first living presidential memorial, deviating sharply from the Classical style that to this day defines the monumental core of Washington, D.C. On a more tangible note, weeds and deadwood had been removed, the northern and central portions of the island planted, and trails laid throughout the landscape. On 5 August 1947, A. E. Demaray, Acting Director of the NPS, personally thanked the members of the RMA for their efforts, effectively bringing to an end the first phase of development on Theodore Roosevelt Island: "May I take this opportunity to express the deep and full appreciation of the National Park Service for the provisions you have made to create a unique memorial to a great American. I am confident that future generations will be inspired by this contribution."⁴⁷⁰

2. Changes and Additions

Circa 1952, the NPS constructed what was originally intended as a temporary boat landing on the north end of the island. The landing consisted of a barge anchored to the rocks some 75' offshore, connected to the island by way of a sandbag walkway topped with a concrete or bituminous surface (Figure 22). Beginning in 1953, the National Capital Parks offered regular ferry service to the island on Saturday and Sunday afternoons from June to October, at a cost of 25 cents for adults and 15 cents for children. Passengers departed from a dock at Wisconsin Avenue and K Street in Georgetown.⁴⁷¹ An orientation station was also maintained with a naturalist on duty to provide information and conduct walks.⁴⁷² Around this time the NPS rebuilt the historic Mason's causeway as a service road for NPS vehicles, with electrical mains and cables laid within its foundations.⁴⁷³ A second, public, causeway was built several hundred feet to the south. Beginning in 1964, reappropriated Navy utility boats began ferrying passengers across the Potomac, up to forty-three at a time. Monday service was also added, and all rides were initially free of charge, but the 25-cent fee was reinstated in 1967.⁴⁷⁴

Additionally, in the early 1950s several plans to bridge the Potomac to alleviate the traffic congestion in downtown Washington, D.C., were presented for Congressional review. As these plans developed, five locations received serious consideration. In sequential order, they were: south of Little Island, over the northern end of Theodore Roosevelt Island, over Little Island, over the center of Theodore Roosevelt Island, and over the southern end of Theodore Roosevelt Island.⁴⁷⁵ Initially, the RMA resisted the bridge plans, stating "Congress passed a law to protect

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁷¹ Charles J. Yarbrough, "2 Minutes and 25 Cents Bring Isolation from Busy City," *Washington Star*, 28 June 1953. The NPS had begun providing ferry service for a few days semi-yearly as early as 1948. See "Park Tours Scheduled This Week," *Washington Post*, 10 September 1948.

⁴⁷² "T. R. Memorial Island Opened Until October," *Washington Star*, 6 June 1953; Matt McDade, "Young Explorers Visit Theodore Roosevelt Island," *Washington Post*, 14 June 1954.

⁴⁷³ Fanning, 12. It is unknown how much of the causeway remained at this point, as holes had previously been made to allow flood waters to flow through. See "Park on Island Opens in Spring, Fanning Asserts," *Washington Star* 16 December 1936.

⁴⁷⁴ "Roosevelt Island Ferry Starts," *Washington Star*, 4 July 1965; Maureen Peterson, "The Wood Duck," *Washington Star*, 11 September 1966; Martin Weil, "Now It Costs to See a Crated Statue," *Washington Post and Times Herald*, 10 July 1967.

⁴⁷⁵ Fanning, 57.

it [the island] from any Government use except as an untouched retreat for nature lovers.”⁴⁷⁶ The RMA held veto power over any construction on the island, as the deed of gift was based on the agreement that “no general plan for the development of the Island be adopted without the approval of the Memorial Association,” and that “no development inconsistent with this plan be executed without the Association’s consent.”⁴⁷⁷ With work at a standstill for years, the bridge proposal effectively revitalized the RMA’s commitment to completing Olmsted’s development plan.⁴⁷⁸ Circa 1952, the RMA printed a booklet intended to rouse public support for the completion of their memorialization efforts, and to help defeat the proposed bridge construction. The booklet contains several impassioned pleas to protect the island from any such project that “would obviously destroy all suggestion of a wilderness” in order “to provide a shortcut for local motorists.”⁴⁷⁹ The RMA also took this opportunity to garner public support for the construction of the outlook plateau, boat landing, and support buildings prior to the centennial of Roosevelt’s birth on 27 October 1958. By 1952, the CCC plantings had made “considerable growth,” but due to deferred maintenance work the honeysuckle and other weedy plants reestablished themselves in some areas. Although the NPS had resumed maintenance programs in order to control these weeds, as with the island’s construction projects, additional planting operations continued to await Congressional appropriations.⁴⁸⁰

In January 1953, RMA Director Hermann Hagedorn traveled to Washington, D.C., to “wage battle” against the bridge development by personally meeting with members of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees and members of the Congressional District of Columbia Committees, who held the say on measures aimed at changing the terms of acceptance of the island by the Federal government from the Association.⁴⁸¹ Later that year RMA President McCoy joined U.S. Grant III and NPS Director Conrad L. Wirth in publicly condemning the bridge plan. Wirth stated the bridge “will destroy it [the island] for the use for which it was meant,” while McCoy went so far as to denounce the proposed plan as “the raping of the park system.”⁴⁸² In the midst of the bridge dispute the RMA officially changed its title to the Theodore Roosevelt Association (TRA), on 21 May 1953.⁴⁸³ The newly renamed organization appealed to the general public to press the bridge issue, and appears to have been at least moderately successful in generating public support for protection of the island. In July an editorial appeared in the *Washington Post* criticizing the government’s willingness to consider the bridge span. As the writer stated, “Perhaps it is an outmoded belief that agreements with

⁴⁷⁶ “Roosevelt Island Row Brews: ‘There Is No Place Like It in the East,’” *Washington Daily News*, 7 February 1952.

⁴⁷⁷ Board of Trustees of the Roosevelt Memorial Association, resolution, 27 October 1932.

⁴⁷⁸ James G. Deane, “Choice of Bridge Site Runs Afoul of Roosevelt Island Restrictions,” *Washington Star*, 13 February 1932.

⁴⁷⁹ Roosevelt Memorial Association, booklet (title page not filmed), ca. 1952, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁸⁰ Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, to Herbert C. Hanson, Brookline, Mass., 30 April 1952, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁸¹ “Leader of Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Arrives to Wage Battle against E St. Span,” *Washington Post*, 23 January 1953.

⁴⁸² “Fight Promised on Any Plan to Run Bridge Over Island,” *Washington Post*, 29 May 1953. See also “Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Island,” *Planning and Civic Comment* (June 1953): 7.

⁴⁸³ *Theodore Roosevelt Association*, 36 U.S. Code, Ch. 2101.

donors should be respected and that parks should be kept as parks. But if a policy is followed of yielding a little here and a little there, the community is likely to awaken one day and find that all of the primitive areas of woods and wildlife have vanished before the bulldozer.”⁴⁸⁴ Over the next several weeks, additional opinion pieces appeared in the newspaper in support of this editorial.⁴⁸⁵

Despite these protests and the claims of the TRA, in July 1953 the Washington, D.C., Board of Commissioners announced that they had been advised that there was “no legal bar” to using Theodore Roosevelt Island as part of the bridge crossing, and that the only remaining question was “if the use of the island for a bridge would be consistent or inconsistent with the purpose for which the island was dedicated.”⁴⁸⁶ The next month the solicitor of the Department of the Interior concurred on the project’s legality, stating that while “there can be no doubt that a bridge across the island would be a use inconsistent with the purpose of the donation and dedication by the Roosevelt Memorial Association . . . it appears that there is no prohibition on simply banning an inconsistent use.” However, he also concluded “that if Congress should decide to permit a bridge over the island it must compensate the Roosevelt Association for taking away the association’s interest in the wooded property.”⁴⁸⁷ Shortly thereafter, Congress authorized a bridge over the southern end of Theodore Roosevelt Island.

The TRA continued to fight against the bridge. On 1 January 1954, the *Washington Star* reported that Joseph C. Grew, chairman of the TRA’s Theodore Roosevelt Island Committee, sent a letter to Brig. General Louis W. Prentiss, an engineer commissioner of the District of Columbia, criticizing the latter’s support of the bridge project as the type of argument that “would lead logically to the desecration of every great national shrine whenever the claim is made that this is necessary for any utilitarian purpose.”⁴⁸⁸ Seeking a compromise, Prentiss submitted a drawing to the House subcommittee “showing that a low-level bridge could be burrowed – above water level – through the island. The tunnel would enter one side of the island and come out the other, with the island’s surface retaining its present condition as a wilderness.”⁴⁸⁹ According to the plan, approximately 35 percent of the island’s total topography would need to be altered, and the lowest lying sections raised 35’. This plan was never seriously considered and ultimately rejected by the Budget Bureau as too costly.⁴⁹⁰ However, in mid-June 1955 the TRA proposed a

⁴⁸⁴ “Desecrating Parkland,” editorial, *Washington Post*, 10 July 1953.

⁴⁸⁵ Anya F. Smith and Fred M. Smith, letter, *Washington Post*, 15 July 1953; “On breaking a Promise,” editorial, *Washington Post*, 24 July 1954. Editorials appearing in the *Washington Star*, however, took the more neutral position of encouraging further study in order to determine whether or not the bridge over Theodore Roosevelt Island was in the best interest of the general public. See “E Street Bridge and Roosevelt Island,” editorial, *Washington Star*, 28 July 1953; “Decide It on the Facts,” editorial, *Washington Star*, 10 August 1953.

⁴⁸⁶ “Roosevelt Island Clear as Bridge Site,” *Washington Post*, 14 July 1953.

⁴⁸⁷ “Congress Can Authorize Span, Interior Rules,” *Washington Star*, 8 August 1953.

⁴⁸⁸ “Grew Hits Idea for Roosevelt Island Bridge,” *Washington Star*, 1 January 1954.

⁴⁸⁹ George Beveridge, “Bridge-Tunnel Would Require Raising [sic] of Island,” *Washington Star*, 12 March 1954.

⁴⁹⁰ Fanning, 74-75. Associate Superintendent of National Capital Parks Harry T. Thompson, a strong supporter of the tunnel proposal, spoke out against the bridge plan, stating that its construction would be like “pulling a sheet over your eyes, and a “great tragedy that the wealthiest nation in the world suffer an irreparable damage to the greatest assembly of memorials in the world for the sake of a few dollars.” See “Revision Seen in Plans for Island Retreat,” *Washington Star*, 24 June 1955. Although the issue had already been decided, the NPS released a comparative analysis of the bridge and tunnel plans in February 1957. See U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park

compromise, sanctioning a bridge over the northern portion of Theodore Roosevelt Island as long as the southern portion, including the sites of the proposed ferry landing and outlook terrace, would not be affected. However, the Washington, D.C., commissioners rejected the proposal since it would cost \$43million to build the bridge to the north and only \$24.5 million across the southern end of the island.⁴⁹¹

That the TRA even proposed such a compromise shows that their position had weakened severely, undoubtedly exacerbated by the death of TRA President McCoy in June 1954, the bridge's most outspoken critic.⁴⁹² That month the TRA refused even to be represented at a District Committee hearing on a plan to construct the bridge across the south end of the island.⁴⁹³ Only a year later, however, the association completely reversed its position and agreed to the proposal. On 8 July 1955, the TRA announced that they would allow the bridge to be constructed across the southern end of Theodore Roosevelt Island, in the interest of better preserving existing views from the Arlington Memorial Bridge and Lincoln Memorial.⁴⁹⁴ While serving as president, Roosevelt himself had played an important role in conserving and developing Washington's monumental core through his strong commitment to the McMillan Commission and its efforts to revitalize the L'Enfant plan. The TRA now considered the protection of this vision to be their paramount responsibility. As Director Hagedorn explained:

*Facing this dilemma, with loyalty to their conception of their [island] memorial on the one side and the preservation of the esthetic harmony of the national Capital on the other, the Executive Committee of the Association have recognized that, not only as American citizens proud of their Nation's Capital city, but as trustees of the association loyal to the civic vision of the man they seek to commemorate, their primary obligation is to the National Capital.*⁴⁹⁵

An article also appeared in the *Washington Post* praising the association's concession, as they had "magnanimously abandoned" their plans for the island so as to preserve the harmony of Washington's monumental core.⁴⁹⁶ Although it appeared that a resolution had finally been reached, the proposed bridge site moved yet again, this time to the center of Theodore Roosevelt Island, and Congress appropriated \$1.5 million to begin construction.⁴⁹⁷ Virginia highway engineers, however, felt that a location this far north would prove too expensive and prevent the

Service, "Facts Relating to Proposals to Construct a Tunnel or Bridge Across the Potomac River in the Constitution Avenue Corridor," 19 February 1957, Washington Star Photographic Collection, *Bridges – D.C. – Theodore Roosevelt Island – Oversized Photos*, District of Columbia Public Library, Martin Luther King, Jr., Branch, Washingtoniana Collection.

⁴⁹¹ "Roosevelt Island Span Plan Killed," *Washington Post*, 9 July 1955; Robert C. Albrook, "Case Urges Final Parley on Island Link to Span," *Washington Post*, 26 June 1955.

⁴⁹² "Headquarters Gazette," *Military Affairs* 18, no. 3 (Autumn 1954): 168.

⁴⁹³ "Let's Go," *Washington Daily News*, 22 July 1954.

⁴⁹⁴ Fanning, 58.

⁴⁹⁵ George Beveridge, "Trustees Okay Bridge over Roosevelt Island," *Washington Star*, 8 July 1955.

⁴⁹⁶ "Concession to Beauty," *Washington Post*, 9 July 1955. See also "Up to Roosevelt Association," editorial, *Washington Star*, 8 July 1955.

⁴⁹⁷ Robert C. Albrook, "Roosevelt Island Trustees Reopen Bridge Site Question," *Washington Post*, 9 July 1955.

span from connecting with the necessary routes on the Virginia side.⁴⁹⁸ Finally, by early January 1956 the TRA formally approved the District's directive to build the new bridge across the southern end of Theodore Roosevelt Island.⁴⁹⁹ In return for this approval, however, the TRA made several demands. They required that the new structure be a low-level bridge, partly screened by the trees on the island; that the design receive CFA approval; that it bear the name "Theodore Roosevelt Bridge"; and that it include direct pedestrian and automobile access to the island.⁵⁰⁰

During the fight over the bridge the TRA, NPS, and Olmsted Brothers also cooperatively petitioned Congress for funding. In March 1954, the Office of the National Capital Parks compiled a list of nine improvement projects for the island, requiring a total expenditure of \$656,400.⁵⁰¹ Estimates for the comfort station and water, electrical, and sewage systems for the island were also prepared in 1954, and in 1955 \$50,000 in Federal funds was allocated for their construction, which seems to have been completed before the end of the year.⁵⁰² The decision to build the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Bridge, however, ensured that Olmsted's vision for the southern end of the island would never be carried out. The comfort station was the lone structure actually constructed in accordance with his plan.

In January 1956, the same month the TRA agreed to the bridge's southern crossing, they invited architect Eric Gugler to prepare a "definite plan" for a memorial to Theodore Roosevelt on the outlook terrace.⁵⁰³ Interest in a memorial had been renewed in late 1955, when TRA Director Hagedorn

*wrote a letter to the Commission of Fine Arts including a sketch of a kind of modern stonehenge to be placed on the highest point of the island. Inscriptions of Roosevelt quotations would be provided, and perhaps there would be a heroic, symbolic group of bronze figures in the center. The Commission liked the design but thought it needed further study.*⁵⁰⁴

⁴⁹⁸ Fanning, 58.

⁴⁹⁹ George Beveridge, "Island Trustees Back Span Plan," *Washington Star*, 5 January 1956. The TRA also rejected a proposal to locate an auditorium and civic center on the island. See "Roosevelt Island Barred as Site for Auditorium," *Washington Post*, 16 January 1956.

⁵⁰⁰ Fanning, 58.

⁵⁰¹ These nine projects were as follows: water supply system: \$14,400, comfort station: \$26,500, ferry terminus at south end of island: \$135,300, memorial terrace: \$164,700, parking and boat docking facilities at north end of Columbia Island: \$135,000, shelter and comfort station at north end of island: \$70,000, landing wharf at north end of island: \$31,700, foot trails: \$49,000, and forestry improvements: \$29,400. See Harry T. Thompson to Carl L. Parker, Washington, D.C., 19 March 1954, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁵⁰² Harry T. Thompson to Carl L. Parker, Washington, D.C., 19 March 1954, 29 June 1954, and 7 December 1954, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.; "House Unit Approves \$50,000 to Develop Roosevelt Island," *Washington Star*, 1 April 1954; Harry T. Thompson to Hermann Hagedorn, Washington, D.C., 10 November 1954, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

⁵⁰³ Netherton, "Delicate Beauty," 87.

⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

Gugler based his design for the memorial on this sketch. It featured twelve granite panels, inscribed with quotations, arranged around a square plaza. The centerpiece was a 30' to 40' bronze armillary sphere,⁵⁰⁵ with a bas-relief of Roosevelt on its granite base, facing a wide reflecting pool (Figure 23).⁵⁰⁶ Gugler recommended that sculptor Paulanship design the sphere, as he had already done several others for major public projects, including the grand *Celestial Sphere* (1939) outside the League of Nations Building in Geneva Switzerland, and a much smaller example for the District's Meridian Hill Park in 1936.⁵⁰⁷ The plan, as reported by Hagedorn, returned to the type of larger Rooseveltian ideals that the TRA had sought to memorialize in Pope's original design for the Tidal Basin site. While the island itself would remain a living embodiment of Roosevelt's conservation ethos, this new memorial would showcase his leadership of the Progressive Movement.

From the base of the sphere, Mr. Hagedorn said, there would be a 10-foot-tall 'flame of burnished bronze, representing Theodore Roosevelt's impassioned ardor in behalf of those 'essentials of popular self government' of which he was declared to have been the supreme teacher.'

On the base itself will be a bas-relief of Theodore Roosevelt. Said the commission's report:

The sphere, symbolizing the free spirit, and the bas-relief in their significance and universality, will together give the Island Memorial more than national significance.

*'They will give it, in fact, a new dimension. It will be not merely a shrine for the great teacher of the essentials of self government, but a sanctuary of the free spirit to which, it is not extravagant to believe, men of every race and color and creed from the four corners of the earth will want to come to refresh, or to deepen, their appreciation of the moral and spiritual foundations of freedom and their understanding of the political institutions that make freedom a practical reality among men.'*⁵⁰⁸

The entire development plan, including memorial, plumbing, electric lights, and a 200-car parking lot for the island, was to cost an estimated \$2.5 million, and to be completed in time for a public unveiling during the island's formal dedication planned for the centenary of Roosevelt's

⁵⁰⁵ An armillary sphere is a skeletal celestial sphere with a model of the sun or, as originally developed by the ancient Greeks, the earth at its center. The entire sphere is designed to rotate, allowing for observational measurements of the sky. Armillary spheres were favored by the astronomer Ptolemy, and were popular as teaching tools through the nineteenth century. For further information on the history and use of armillary spheres, see S. Schechner Genuth, "Armillary Sphere," in *Instruments of Science: An Historical Encyclopedia*, eds. Robert Bud and Deborah Jean Warner (New York: Science Museum, London, and National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, in association with Garland Pub., 1998), 28-31.

⁵⁰⁶ "Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Advanced," *Washington Star*, 17 July 1959.

⁵⁰⁷ This armillary sphere measures approximately 24" in diameter and is now located on the grounds of the U.S. National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. For more information, see Smithsonian American Art Museum, *Art Inventories Catalog*.

⁵⁰⁸ George Beveridge, "Memorial Area Planned For Roosevelt Island," *Washington Star*, 2 March 1956.

birth in 1958.⁵⁰⁹ By that summer, however, the project had not progressed beyond the planning stage, and plans for the island's dedication were amended to coincide with the city's Fourth of July celebration.⁵¹⁰ The program began at 7:15 p.m.; six hundred guests were invited onto the island for the dedication ceremony, but fewer than half attended. A series of speakers led by Maryland Governor Theodore R. McKeldin, and including Hagedorn and NPS Director Conrad L. Worth, delivered oratories extolling Roosevelt.⁵¹¹ Then at 9:10 p.m. the fireworks were set off from a recently cleared section of woodland at the southern end of the island, the first year the display had been held away from the Washington Monument grounds. Irston R. Barnes, President of the Audubon Society of the District of Columbia, condemned the decision as "a new and shabby way of debasing Roosevelt Island and dishonoring the memory of a great President." He argued that the fireworks would set a bad precedent for future displays launched from other wildlife and natural areas, since they "are entirely inappropriate and are destructive to the aims for which such an area is set up."⁵¹² The change of venue likewise alarmed citizens, who worried that Roosevelt, an avid ornithologist, would have objected to the disruption and been "in a regular tizzy" over the desecration of a wildlife sanctuary.⁵¹³ Conversely, TRA Director Hagedorn chided these "wildlife friends" as acting "more papal than the Pope in protesting so loudly." While Roosevelt indeed cherished birds, Hagedorn claimed that he also loved fireworks, and thus set off increasingly more elaborate displays each year.⁵¹⁴

The *Washington Daily News* viewed this "uproar" over the fireworks as a significant enough news story to dispatch a field journalist, Nicholas Blatchford, to report on the island's existing flora and fauna. His account, while far from complete, provides a good overview of the species present at the time. Arriving by boat at the northern ferry landing, Blatchford noted the large rocks there were covered with wild roses. Moving south he encountered clover, wild carrot, and Joe-Pye-weed, as well as a large box turtle climbing the hill at the center of the island. At the top, he also noted a flagpole, without a flag, and a boarded-up refreshment stand. Continuing south "down [a] clean, wide trail" Blatchford described a "beautiful forest of elm, oak, beech, maple, persimmon, locust, and tulip trees. Many big, old grape vines, fine for swinging. Also old, hairy, poison ivy vines; not for swinging." He spotted several species of birds, including blue jay, thrush, chickadee, woodpecker, and crow. Near the marsh he noted cattails, arrowroot, and skunk cabbage, as well as the felled woodland. Regarding the fireworks, Blatchford's opinion was midway between the two sides of the debate, namely that while the fireworks would not harm the wildlife, they did set a bad precedent for the future.⁵¹⁵ There was no damage to the island from the fireworks, and no reported injuries to any wildlife, but the event was moved back to the National Mall the following year.⁵¹⁶

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid.; "Bill Proposes Island Memorial Honoring Theodore Roosevelt," *Washington Star*, 8 January 1957; "New Memorial Design Pleases Family of T. R.," *Washington Post*, 23 June 1961.

⁵¹⁰ "Dedication of Roosevelt Island, Fireworks Display Mark July 4," *Washington Post and Times Herald*, 4 July 1958.

⁵¹¹ "Fireworks, Patriotic Music, Oratory, Pay Tribute to Theodore Roosevelt," *Washington Star*, 5 July 1958.

⁵¹² Irston R. Barnes, "Do Fireworks Honor Theodore Roosevelt?" *Washington Post*, 29 June 1958.

⁵¹³ Ethel Quillian Bixby, "Birds in Danger," letter, *Washington Post*, 23 June 1958.

⁵¹⁴ Hermann Hagedorn, "TR and Fireworks," *Washington Post*, 28 June 1958.

⁵¹⁵ Nicholas Blatchford, "A Wildlively Dispatch from Roosevelt Island," *Washington Daily News*, 27 June 1958.

⁵¹⁶ "Fireworks at Monument Likely in '59," *Washington Post and Times Herald*, 6 July 1958.

By 1960, the plan for the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, featuring Gugler's plaza and Manship's armillary sphere, had been approved by the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), CFA, NPS, and President Eisenhower. However, when the plan was made public following its introduction to Congress, it touched off an unexpected wave of criticism and scorn not only from congressmen, but also from reporters, conservationists, the Roosevelt family, and the general public.⁵¹⁷ On 12 July 1960, the *Washington Post* reported that the TRA had originally intended the memorial to be much smaller, and that it was only enlarged after plans showed that the bridge would have screened it from the Lincoln Memorial, the only point from the mainland from which the Roosevelt Memorial was to be visible. However, this reasoning did not satisfy *Post* art critic Leslie Judd Ahlander, who attacked the proposed memorial, stating, "It is hard to believe that Theodore Roosevelt Island will long remain the beautiful bird refuge it now is, when it has a tourist attraction of this size and proportion installed upon it."⁵¹⁸ A reporter from *The Georgetown* remarked that "it will be only a matter of time before the hot dog and frozen custard stands spring up."⁵¹⁹ A displeased citizen thought that Roosevelt would be "spinning in the soil" over the project,⁵²⁰ and the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* went so far as to call for a moratorium on Federal monuments in and around Washington, D.C., concerned that "there is grave danger that artistic atrocities and irrevocable blunders are about to be committed."⁵²¹ Disparaging nicknames for the proposed sphere included the "blockhouse at San Juan Hill," a "startling roost," and "pantywaist contraption."⁵²²

On July 24, Barnes wrote a scathing article condemning the memorial "about to become a destroyer of the true memory of one of our great Presidents." While praising Roosevelt's conservationist spirit and Olmsted's original concept, he condemned both the bridge and the memorial. In Barnes' words, "it is the intrusion of the bridge that has paved the way for this latest plan to destroy an enduring, living and meaningful memorial with an arty edifice that can only impair the dignity and memory of the man we all honor."⁵²³ Indeed, the Boone and Crockett Club, originally formed by Theodore Roosevelt, flatly stated "conservationists from all over the country have agreed the project is 'a horrible monstrosity,'" and that "providing the island bird sanctuary with roads, parking lot and a 'glorified gyroscope' will ruin the natural beauty of the

⁵¹⁷ Fanning, 60. In addition to the armillary sphere, much criticism was also leveled at plans to include parking spaces and electric lights on the island. See John J. Lindsay, "Memorial May 'Update' Wild Beauty of Roosevelt Island with Lights, Cars," *Washington Post*, 8 July 1960; Carole H. Bowie, "People, Cars Seen Sully Nature Haven," *Washington Post*, 10 July 1960. At least one editorial, however, appeared in favor of the sphere, and another raised the point that Congress should not have the power to overrule a decision made by the TRA, CFA, and NCPC. See "No Laughing Matter," *Washington Post*, editorial, 6 August 1960; "What? No Sphere?" *Washington Star*, editorial, 6 September 1960.

⁵¹⁸ Leslie Judd Ahlander, "Teddy Roosevelt Memorial: Project Is Called an Outsized Duplicate," *Washington Post*, 12 July 1960.

⁵¹⁹ Marilyn Houston, "Theodore Roosevelt Island . . . A Quiet Refuge in the Potomac Becomes a Storm Center," *The Georgetown*, 11 August 1960.

⁵²⁰ Stephan Vic, "Monumental Error," letter, *Washington Post*, 21 July 1960.

⁵²¹ "Is This Memorial Really Necessary?" *Washington Post*, 11 August 1960.

⁵²² "Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Nears Actuality but Battle Still Rages on Design," *Washington Star*, 14 August 1960.

⁵²³ Irston R. Barnes, "Bill Threatens Memory of T. R.," *Washington Post*, 24 July 1960.

wild life haven.”⁵²⁴ More succinctly, “nature should not be disturbed, he added, in order to honor a naturalist.”⁵²⁵

Theodore Roosevelt’s own daughter, Alice Roosevelt Longworth, extended this criticism even further. Widely quoted as calling it a “globular jungle gym,” she believed that the memorial “would desecrate the memory of anyone.” She also strongly felt that “there are too few areas in this country that now where one can walk and enjoy wildlife in its primeval state,” and that the “lovely, wild island should be left just as it is . . . It’s a splendid memorial for my father.”⁵²⁶ The public, by and large, felt the same way. As one concerned citizen put it, “Mrs. Longworth shares in the general community consensus that the best memorial is the island as it is – undecorated by metal geegaws.”⁵²⁷ Another sounded a warning to those he termed the “fervent memorialists,” that the community would not condone this “mishmash of entangled hula hoops.”⁵²⁸ “The armillary sphere was [further] derided as a ‘bulging excrescence,’ ‘an onion ring fried in molten bronze,’ and ‘doughnuts in limbo.’”⁵²⁹

Even some of the sphere’s supporters admitted that, “in our opinion, there are better ways to commemorate Theodore Roosevelt than by a memorial of this sort,” but since only the TRA, CFA, and NCPC, held the power to approve the design, it would be a mistake by Congress to reject the memorial “because some of its members may not like the design.”⁵³⁰ Nevertheless, as Congressman Howard Smith put it, “everybody laughed” when the design was first shown to the House Rules Committee, and again when news reporters were admitted to record the Representatives’ opinions. According to Smith, the real danger was that “when the memorial is erected it will evoke laughter, not respect, from those who see it. And that would be an ironical fate for Teddy Roosevelt.”⁵³¹ Despite these concerns, President Eisenhower endorsed the memorial and the House passed the bill, authorizing \$888,400 in Federal funds to finance the memorial.⁵³² The Senate, on the other hand, did not, due in large part to the protestations of Alice Roosevelt Longworth. On 19 August 1960, the Senate voted to halt the bill until a design more acceptable to the members of the Roosevelt family was proposed.⁵³³

⁵²⁴ Robert L. Asher, “TR Memorial Criticized by More Groups,” *Washington Post*, 14 August 1960.

⁵²⁵ Ibid. See also “Apply the Big Stick,” editorial, *Washington Post*, 8 August 1960; Marquis Childs, “The Marble Lobby Besieges Capital,” *Washington Post*, 7 September 1960; “Let People Walk In,” editorial, *Washington Post*, 23 November 1960.

⁵²⁶ Carole H. Bowie, “TR Memorial Plans Would Desecrate Anyone’s Memory, Daughter Says,” *Washington Post*, 19 August 1960. Archibald B. Roosevelt, the last surviving son of Theodore Roosevelt, and Kermit Roosevelt, the President’s grandson, also voiced their displeasure regarding the planned memorial. See Carol Bowie, “Senate Rejects ‘Celestial Sphere’ As Design for ‘T.R.’ Memorial,” *Washington Post*, 20 August 1960.

⁵²⁷ “Squashing the Sphere,” *Washington Post*, letter, 21 August 1960.

⁵²⁸ Angus Sinclair, “Alert!” letter, *Washington Star*, 18 July 1960.

⁵²⁹ Fanning, 60.

⁵³⁰ “No Laughing Matter,” editorial, *Washington Post*, 6 August 1960.

⁵³¹ Ibid.

⁵³² “Ike Endorses Memorial on River Isle,” *Washington Post and Times Herald*, 24 February 1960; “Leave It to Alice!” editorial, *Washington Daily News*, 20 August 1960.

⁵³³ Bowie, “Senate Rejects ‘Celestial Sphere’ As Design for ‘T.R.’ Memorial.” There were three surviving Roosevelt children: Alice Roosevelt Longworth, Archibald B. Roosevelt, and Ethyl Derby. All three visited the island in November 1960, giving their opinions on the island’s future development and memorialization efforts. Archibald again proposed Akeley’s lion, but Mrs. Longworth felt that an animal indigenous to the United States

A year later, Roosevelt's children, along with the NCPC, CFA, and TRA, came out in strong support of a second design by Gugler and Manship.⁵³⁴ No electric lights were included in this plan, and owing to the Roosevelts' strong desire to keep automobiles off the island, there was no parking lot. A bronze portrait statue of Theodore Roosevelt, right arm raised in a characteristic speaking pose, replaced the much-maligned armillary sphere as the centerpiece of a new elliptical plaza. Four large monoliths inscribed with Roosevelt quotations were fixed behind the statue, along the interior edge of a water-filled moat laid out around the memorial's perimeter. Two semi-circular pools were arranged symmetrically within the plaza, with each fed by a granite fountain basin raised atop ornamental supports. Matching granite step-bridges, placed on axis with the fountains, spanned the exterior moat. The design for the plaza also included a pair of boxwood planting beds flanking each of the two fountains.⁵³⁵ NPS landscape plans record that twenty-six common boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*) shrubs of three different sizes (two at 8' tall with a 6' spread, nine at 6' x 5', and fifteen at 4' x 4') were planted in a naturalistic arrangement in each of the four beds.⁵³⁶ Four-thousand six-hundred English ivy (*Hedera helix*) plants were laid as groundcover for the boxwood beds. Forty-six true English dwarf box (*Buxus sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa') bushes were planted adjacent to the monoliths. Finally, thirty-eight 6' x 8' willow oak trees were evenly spaced around the pools, with sixteen larger 8' x 10' specimens used to set off the monoliths and plaza entrances (Figure 24). Additional plantings and slight alterations to the existing trails system were also necessary to integrate the memorial within the surrounding forested landscape (Figures 25 and 26). Work proceeded under the direction of NPS landscape architect Lee Skillman.

Construction of the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Bridge, begun in 1960, effectively destroyed any possibility of developing the outlook terrace, so a new site to the far northwest was selected for the memorial. Public reaction to the memorial, funded through a \$1.4 million Congressional appropriation, was initially mixed. Supporters felt it "a Bully design,"⁵³⁷ while detractors often saw it as nothing more than "useless chunks of metal and stone,"⁵³⁸ or an "exercise in sterile formality."⁵³⁹ The *Washington Post* even printed a fictitious memorandum from Theodore Roosevelt that criticized the design as "unnatural, pompous tomfoolery in heavy marble."⁵⁴⁰ Others repeated the belief that the island itself was the most fitting monument to Roosevelt, and anything more was both unnecessary and inappropriate.⁵⁴¹ Despite these objections, the project moved forward, and on 27 October 1967, Roosevelt's 109th birthday, President Lyndon B.

would be more appropriate. All three were particularly adamant that automobiles not be allowed on the island. See "Roosevelt Son Suggests Bronze Lion Memorial," *Washington Star*, 26 August 1960; Gilbert Grumble, "Roosevelts Inspect Island," *Washington Star*, 22 November 1960.

⁵³⁴ Fanning, 4; "T. R.'s Family Approves," *Washington Daily News*, 19 October 1961; "'T. R. Would Like It,'" editorial, *Washington Post*, 23 October 1961.

⁵³⁵ "New Plan for TR Memorial Is Unveiled Here," *Washington Post*, 7 March 1962; "Bid Accepted On Memorial To Roosevelt," *Washington Star*, 26 June 1963.

⁵³⁶ The two northern and two southern beds were arranged as mirror images of one another.

⁵³⁷ "A Bully Design," editorial, *Washington Star*, 16 March 1962.

⁵³⁸ "Memory and Utility," *Washington Post*, 8 March 1962.

⁵³⁹ James Hibbard, "An Exercise in Sterile Formality," *Washington Daily News*, 20 June 1967.

⁵⁴⁰ Wolf Von Eckhart, "A Wraith Flails a Big Stick Against the TR Memorial," *Washington Post*, 19 June 1966.

⁵⁴¹ "The Bronze Age," editorial, *Washington Post*, 22 October 1961.

Johnson formally dedicated the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial.⁵⁴² Mrs. Alice Roosevelt Longworth was there at his side on the reviewing stand, and helped the president unveil the statue, which she was seeing for the first time that day.⁵⁴³ Never one to mince words, her outspoken criticism had effectively killed the earlier design, but she was quoted as saying of the current memorial: "I like it enormously. I think I have a rather mean disposition, but I can find nothing critical to say about it."⁵⁴⁴

However, in less than twelve years the visual appearance of Manship's statue significantly declined, and so curator Nicolas Veloz, Jr. initiated a cleaning and conservation program in 1979. Although the bronze sculpture was not seriously damaged, a lack of regular maintenance combined with well intentioned but ill conceived treatments quickly resulted in an aesthetically unpleasant surface finish. Specifically, dirt, pollutants, and wax had accumulated to such an extent that the statue turned an overall dull black color and details of the hair and jewelry were obscured. Oxidation of the bronze caused patches of light green corrosion to appear, particularly on those parts of the statue most exposed to water and wind-borne abrasion: the head, shoulders, lapels, left forearm, tops of hands, shoes, frock coat, and metal base. In 1974, NPS personnel applied a dark green pigment to the statue, most likely to disguise corrosion, and in 1978 added dark shoe polish to the legs and shoes as a means of covering scratched-in graffiti. Veloz, Jr.'s treatment focused on the removal of these surface accretions and coatings, use of a commercial bronze patination solution to appropriately conceal the graffiti, and implementation of a future maintenance plan to protect against new corrosion. This last measure directed that the statue's surface be washed and waxed annually or biannually, with the wax stripped and reapplied every five years in conjunction with the corrosion inhibitor benzotriazole.⁵⁴⁵

The *Georgetown Speculator* reported that guided nature walks were still offered on Theodore Roosevelt Island three times daily during the summer of 1969. These programs were discontinued shortly thereafter, and since the 1970s there has been no daily NPS presence on site. However, in the early 1980s one dedicated woman earned the honorary title "Mayor of Theodore Roosevelt Island" from NPS rangers. In March 1982, the *Washington Post* reported that seventy-five-year-old widow Lee Cottrell had visited the island almost every day since its formal dedication in 1967. While she once gave volunteer tours, Cottrell most often simply spent her time enjoying the island's natural beauty. "This is my home and my life," she said, "I'd build a damn tree house here if I could." She became an expert on its flora and fauna during her many hikes, and her affinity for the place was so great that she stated, "When I die want to be cremated and I've told my son and my dearest friends to scatter my ashes on the island."⁵⁴⁶

⁵⁴² Willard Clopton, Jr., "Rough Rider 'Rides' Again," *Washington Post*, 28 October 1967.

⁵⁴³ Lee Flor, "Theodore Roosevelt Statue Unveiled," *Washington Star*, 28 October 1967. For further criticism of the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, see "Memory and Utility," editorial, *Washington Post*, 8 March 1962; Diane Baker and Clark Baker, "Theodore Roosevelt Monument," letter, *Washington Post*, 9 July 1963.

⁵⁴⁴ "Happy Birthday T. R.," *Time*, 3 November 1967. Again, despite the support of the Roosevelt family the memorial was criticized in the press, with a *Washington Star* reporter mocking the statue's posture as the first "public figure depicted playing handball in a frock coat." See David Braaten, "D.C.: Statue Capital of the World," *Washington Star*, 2 November 1967.

⁵⁴⁵ Zycheman and Veloz, Jr., 24-33.

⁵⁴⁶ Chip Brown, "Island Guardian: Widow's Care of Wildlife Earns Title of Mayor," *Washington Post*, 31 March 1982.

C. Historical Context

1. Theodore Roosevelt: Historical Overview

During his lifetime, Theodore Roosevelt was, and remains today, an American marvel. Throughout his remarkable, versatile, and strenuous life he played many roles and explored a myriad of interests. Roosevelt is arguably best remembered as a hunter and a rancher, the consummate outdoorsman. He was, however, so much more. The burly Roosevelt, for a time idolized by both his children and the nation, not only survived an assassin's bullet fired at point blank range, but went on to deliver his hour-and-a-half speech as planned, using his blood-stained shirt as a political symbol.⁵⁴⁷ He journeyed to Africa on safari, and late in life explored Brazil's Rio da Duvia, the River of Doubt, one of few completely uncharted areas on earth in the early twentieth century.⁵⁴⁸ These feats are all the more remarkable given that repeated bouts of asthma left him a frail and sickly youth. Too ill even to attend school, his wealthy New York family instead brought tutors to him, while his father encouraged an active exercise regimen as a means of overcoming his physical weakness. The younger Roosevelt heeded this advice, and throughout his life would rely on physical challenges to keep his body fit and his mind sharp.⁵⁴⁹

This resolve carried over into Roosevelt's political life, when in 1881 he became the youngest state assemblyman in New York history at only twenty-three years of age. During his political career Roosevelt held many additional elected offices and appointments: U.S. civil service commissioner (1889-95), New York City police commissioner (1895-96), assistant secretary of the navy (1897-98), governor of New York (1899-1901), vice president (1901), and finally president of the United States (1901-09). Throughout this time Roosevelt served as a leader of the Progressive Movement, railing against corruption, political inefficiency, and the widening gap between rich and poor in American society. He emerged as the champion of the middle-class, much to the chagrin of the nation's elite, who considered him a traitor to his own class.⁵⁵⁰ While governor, Roosevelt made such a concerted effort to root out political patronage and "machine politics" that Republican political boss Senator Thomas Platt (R-NY) forced him into running as William McKinley's vice presidential nominee in the election of 1900 as a means of stripping him of any real power.⁵⁵¹ This tactic utterly backfired as only months after the election President McKinley was shot and killed by anarchist Leon Czolgosz. Roosevelt ascended to the presidency where he ramped up his reforms by targeting what he viewed as the nation's single largest internal threat: the consolidation of wealth and power in the large, politically-connected business corporations commonly known as trusts. Roosevelt promised every American citizen a "Square Deal," by which the previously unchecked powers of the trusts would be curbed through prudent government intervention. He secured his biggest victory in 1904, when the U.S.

⁵⁴⁷ Roosevelt's life was most likely saved by his glasses case and thick, folded speech, which slowed and partially deflected the bullet. Both the glasses case and the first page of the speech, complete with bullet hole, are on display at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C. For more information on the failed assassination attempt, see Nathan Miller, *Theodore Roosevelt: A Life* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1992), 530-31.

⁵⁴⁸ Candice Millard, *Theodore Roosevelt's Darkest Journey: The River of Doubt* (New York: Doubleday, 2005), 58.

⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

⁵⁵⁰ Millard, 14.

⁵⁵¹ Miller, 338.

Supreme Court forced the breakup of J. P. Morgan's Northern Securities Company, the largest and most powerful railroad trust in America. Two years earlier, Roosevelt had forced a resolution to the 163-day Anthracite Coal Mine Strike, which granted the miners' demands for higher wages and a shorter work day. Never before had a president so clearly favored the rights of labor over those of big business.⁵⁵²

Roosevelt, the ardent trust-buster, was not, however, always so unilaterally one-sided in his political principles. His Progressivism led him to support women's suffrage, but he also believed that "the woman must remain the housemother, the homekeeper, and the man must remain the breadwinner, the provider for the wife who bears his children and for the children she brings into the world."⁵⁵³ He also spoke out against the use of birth control, which fellow Progressive reformer Margaret Sanger would champion in the coming decades as a means of ensuring women's health and empowerment. Likewise, while Roosevelt supported the fair treatment of all citizens, he did little to actually advance African-American enfranchisement.⁵⁵⁴

Roosevelt also lived by his own maxim, "speak softly and carry a big stick." As president, he earned the 1906 Nobel Peace Prize for his role in negotiating the end of the Russo-Japanese War, the first American to receive the honor. While Roosevelt held a genuine desire for peace, he also decried what he termed the "evils of pacifism," and held that lasting security could only be accomplished through a willingness to fight. In his 1906 annual address to Congress, he bluntly asserted that, "A just war is in the long run far better for a man's soul than the most prosperous peace."⁵⁵⁵ Likewise, "The State" monolith at the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial is inscribed with the quintessential quote, "If I must choose between righteousness and peace, I choose righteousness."⁵⁵⁶ Even more telling than his words were his deeds. On 16 December 1907, Roosevelt made it clear that the United States had arrived as a global military power when he ordered four battleship squadrons, the "Great White Fleet," on a fourteen-month circumnavigation of the globe to show that the American navy was capable of operating anywhere in the world. Roosevelt himself had resigned as assistant secretary of the navy in 1898 to lead the famous "Rough Riders" of the 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry during the Spanish-American War. Despite all of his later accomplishments, Roosevelt considered the Battle of San Juan Hill, fought 1 July 1898, "the great day of my life," and thereafter continued to be addressed as colonel, a title he preferred even to that of president.⁵⁵⁷

Roosevelt's supporters viewed him as the unifier of national divisions and a man strong enough to defend America against any threat, whether internal or external. His actions, although sometimes unconventional, were in the country's own best interest. His detractors considered

⁵⁵² David C. Hanson, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressive Movement* (Roanoke, Va.: Virginia Western Community College, 1999), <http://www.vw.vccs.edu/vwhansd/HIS122/Teddy/TRProgressive.html> (accessed 17 July 2007).

⁵⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁵ Theodore Roosevelt quoted in Edmund Morris, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1979), 12.

⁵⁵⁶ Theodore Roosevelt, *America and the World War* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1915), 36.

⁵⁵⁷ Theodore Roosevelt to Hermann Hagedorn, Harvard Club, 14 August 1917, quoted in Edmund Morris, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, 650.

him an imperialist and a power hungry egotist. The legendary American writer Samuel Clemens, himself a brilliant but eccentric individual, considered Roosevelt “clearly insane . . . and insanest upon war and its extreme glories.”⁵⁵⁸ Speaker of the House Joe Cannon stated publicly that Roosevelt had “no more use for the Constitution than a tomcat has for a marriage license.”⁵⁵⁹ Roosevelt’s critics could, and often did, stake their claims on one specific issue: the Panama Canal. In 1902, the United States agreed to buy out the equipment and take over excavations from France, who since 1880, had been attempting to build a canal across the Isthmus of Panama, then a province of Columbia. Negotiations between the United States and Columbia quickly broke down, as the latter stalled the project by demanding more money for the land. Roosevelt fumed, “we were dealing with a government of irresponsible bandits.”⁵⁶⁰ Rather than continuing through official channels, Roosevelt collaborated with Panamanian business interests in spurring a revolution, which in a matter of hours succeeded in establishing the nation of Panama on 3 November 1903. Work began on the canal the next year, but Roosevelt’s support of the coup showed that he was willing to go to nearly any lengths to achieve his goals.

Roosevelt was no less complex a man in his personal life. While fully capable of regaling visiting dignitaries and heads of state, he was even more interested in seeing his old friends. When a doorkeeper mistakenly barred a particularly scruffy fellow Rough Rider admittance to the White House, Roosevelt quipped, “The next time they don’t let you in, Sylvane, you just shoot through the windows.”⁵⁶¹ Likewise, Roosevelt has come to personify rugged individualism, encapsulated by such iconic statements as, “All daring and courage, all iron endurance of fortune make for a finer and nobler type of manhood,”⁵⁶² and, “Courage, hard work, self-mastery, and intelligent effort are all essential to successful life.”⁵⁶³ He was, however, also a consummate intellectual, voracious reader, and dedicated writer, authoring some thirty-five books and 150,000 letters in his lifetime. Finally, Roosevelt was a loving and devoted father, and himself a child at heart. The Roosevelt children, Alice, Ted, Kermit, Ethel, Archie, and Quentin, were the first young people to live at the white house, and regardless of his schedule Roosevelt made time for them. In recalling one day of play, Roosevelt remarked, “It seems, to put it mildly, rather odd for a stout, elderly President to be bounding over hayricks in a wild effort to get to goal before an active midget of a competitor, aged nine years. However, it really

⁵⁵⁸ Mark Twain [Samuel Clemens], *Mark Twain in Eruption: Hitherto Unpublished Pages about Men and Manners*, ed. Bernard de Voto (New York: Harper and Bros., 1940), 8, quoted in Edmund Morris, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, 12.

⁵⁵⁹ *Evening Star*, 31 December 1906, quoted in Edmund Morris, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, 11.

⁵⁶⁰ Wheeling Jesuit University and Center for Educational Technologies, “Central America, Panama Canal: Pre-Canal History,” in *Global Perspectives: A Remote Sensing & World Issues Site* (Wheeling, W. Va.: Wheeling Jesuit University and Center for Educational Technologies, 1999), <http://www.cet.edu/earthinfo/camerica/panama/PCtopic2.html> (accessed 12 July 2007).

⁵⁶¹ Theodore Roosevelt, quoted in Edmund Morris, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, 15.

⁵⁶² This quotation appears on the “Manhood” monolith at the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial and is taken from Theodore Roosevelt, *American Ideals* (New York: The Review of Reviews Company, 1904), 197-98.

⁵⁶³ This quotation appears on the “Youth” monolith at the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial and is taken from Roosevelt, *America and the World War*, 197-98.

was great fun.”⁵⁶⁴ As his old friend, British Ambassador Cecil Spring Rice, was fond of saying, “You must always remember that the President is about six.”⁵⁶⁵

Theodore Roosevelt was, in a word, unique. His complex, often contradictory character simultaneously elevated him to leadership on the world’s stage, while remaining a man of the people. His sheer force of personality reined in these seemingly disparate aspects of his life, and even his most ardent opponents grudgingly gave him their respect. Even more importantly, Roosevelt led by example, always assured that his way was the right way and never backing down from his convictions. Historians continually rank Theodore Roosevelt among the top four greatest presidents in history, as much for his deeds as how he lived his life, and by extension encouraged others to live. It is, therefore, necessary to understand the man in order to appreciate his memorial, and his own words inscribed therein. Roosevelt’s greatest legacy, however, remains his stewardship of the nation’s national resources, as without his pioneering efforts, they would have been consumed in the short-term and not managed for the future. Theodore Roosevelt Island itself is therefore a fitting memorial to his foresight and commitment.

2. Theodore Roosevelt: Conservation, Preservation, and the Public Interest

From an early age Theodore Roosevelt held a keen interest in nature and animals. As soon as his health improved the young boy began his “zoo,” collecting thousands of specimens for his own education, and later for use by museums and scientific institutions.⁵⁶⁶ His passion for the natural sciences, especially ornithology, as well as hunting, fishing, hiking, and in general what he would later term “the strenuous life,” fostered his lifelong love of the outdoors.⁵⁶⁷ In 1876, the eighteen-year-old Roosevelt enrolled at Harvard and excelled in scientific coursework, but he dismissed this career option due to the practical necessity of long hours spent working in an indoor laboratory. At the time, the scientific community stressed the value of laboratory experimentation at the near total exclusion of practical fieldwork. Disheartened by this reality, Roosevelt later recalled, “I had no more desire to become a microscopist and section-cutter than to be a mathematician. Accordingly, I abandoned all thought of becoming a scientist.”⁵⁶⁸ Instead, after graduating magna cum laude he chose to pursue his political career, but maintained an avid interest in the natural world.

Four years later, personal tragedy led him to resign his seat in the New York State Assembly and put his promising political career on hold. On 14 February 1884, his mother, Martha Bulloch Roosevelt, died of typhoid fever, and his first wife, Alice, died of Bright’s Disease. Two days prior she had given birth to the couple’s only child, Alice Lee. Roosevelt, who kept a journal nearly his entire life, recorded the date with a large black “X” and the single line, “The light has gone out of my life.” Overcome with grief, he entrusted the care of his infant daughter to his

⁵⁶⁴ Mariah Burton Nelson, “Teddy’s Island of Memories,” *Washington Post*, 13 May 1988.

⁵⁶⁵ David Henry Burton, *Cecil Spring Rice: A Diplomat’s Life* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickenson University Press, 1990), 56.

⁵⁶⁶ Millard, 23.

⁵⁶⁷ For a thorough discussion of Theodore Roosevelt’s philosophy of hard work and manly virtues, see Theodore Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life* (New York: The Century Company, 1901).

⁵⁶⁸ Millard, 24.

sister Anna and removed himself to the Badlands of the Dakota Territory, seeking relief in nature and through the demanding life of a cattle rancher.

Roosevelt had traveled to the Dakota Territory the year before to hunt bison, and by the end of his fifteen-day trip had entered the cattle business through his purchase of a share of the Maltese Cross Ranch, located about seven miles south of the town of Medora. He returned in June 1884, and since his cattle had wintered well, decided to purchase another 1,000 head and “make it my regular business.” Roosevelt also selected the location for a second ranch, naming it the Elkhorn. He purchased the rights to the site, located thirty-five miles north of Medora, from the previous occupant for \$400.⁵⁶⁹ Later in life he fondly recalled his time at the two ranches: “In that land we led a hardy life. Ours was the glory of work and the joy of living.”⁵⁷⁰ Roosevelt also served as a deputy sheriff, hunting down horse thieves and at one point capturing three men who stole his riverboat and escaped with it down the Little Missouri River.

His personal losses and his time spent in the Badlands had changed him, made him stronger, both mentally and physically. Roosevelt arrived in 1883 a wealthy aristocrat. Upon his return to New York three years later, his social status had not changed, but the experience taught him to gauge a person’s worth on character and accomplishments, rather than economic standing, formal education, or class. He had also earned the respect of even the most hardened cattlemen through his dedication and commitment to hard work. Even more importantly, he became increasingly alarmed by the damage he witnessed being done to the land and wildlife. Populations of big game species, bison chief among them, had dropped to alarmingly low levels due to rampant overhunting, disease, and loss of habitat. Birds and small mammals fared little better. According to the TRA, “conservation now combined with his naturalist inclinations and increasingly became one of Roosevelt’s major concerns.”⁵⁷¹ His western retreat strengthened him both mentally and physically, and informed his future to such an extent that he later commented, “I never would have been President if it had not been for my experiences in North Dakota.”⁵⁷²

In 1886, Roosevelt married his childhood love, Edith Kermit Carow, returned to politics, and by 1901 had been elected Vice President of the United States. On 6 September, assassin Leon Czolgosz shot President William McKinley, but as the president survived the initial attack and seemed to be recovering, Roosevelt proceeded with a scheduled family camping trip to Mount Marcy in the Adirondacks. Just over a week later, Roosevelt was enjoying a solitary hike when a runner, who had been searching for the vice president for hours, finally caught up with him and informed him that McKinley’s condition had severely worsened. The president was now on his deathbed. McKinley died around 2:30 a.m. on the morning of 16 September 1901, and Roosevelt, at age forty-two, became the youngest man in history to ascend to the presidency.

⁵⁶⁹ U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, *Elkhorn Ranch*, (Medora, N.Dak.: Theodore Roosevelt National Park, 2007), <http://www.nps.gov/thro/historyculture/elkhorn-ranch.htm> (accessed 7 August 2007).

⁵⁷⁰ Theodore Roosevelt, (*The Rough Riders: An Autobiography*, ed. Louis Auchincloss, (New York: Library of America, 2004), 346.

⁵⁷¹ Theodore Roosevelt Association, “Life in the West: Roosevelt as a Rancher and Growing Conservationist,” in *Theodore Roosevelt Association*, ed. Rogina L. Jeffries (Oyster Bay, N.Y.: Theodore Roosevelt Association, 2007), <http://www.theodoreroosevelt.org/life/trrancher.htm> (accessed 29 June 2007).

⁵⁷² Theodore Roosevelt quoted in U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, *Maltese Cross Cabin*.

Although he achieved many successes as President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt's lasting legacy is his stewardship of the nation's natural resources. Alarmed at the serious decline of forested land and the growing threat of species extinction, Roosevelt made conservation a key tenet of United States domestic policy.⁵⁷³ Roosevelt served during the first decade of the twentieth century, a time when most Americans still held to the nineteenth-century belief that natural resources were essentially unlimited. With great foresight he correctly acknowledged that, "We are prone to speak of the resources of this country as inexhaustible; this is not so,"⁵⁷⁴ and challenged citizens to realize that, "The conservation of our natural resources and their proper use constitute the fundamental problem which underlies almost every other problem of our national life. Unless we maintain an adequate material basis for our civilization, we can not maintain the institutions in which we take so great and so just a pride; and to waste and destroy our natural resources means to undermine this material basis."⁵⁷⁵ When Roosevelt took office there was no systematic management plan in place regarding the use of natural resources, and very limited regulation by the Federal government. Essentially, the private sector determined how the landscape was utilized, and the decisions inevitably rested along economic lines. It was simply more profitable to maximize productivity in the present and disregard the future consequences. As Roosevelt wrote in his 1913 autobiography:

At that time a narrowly legalistic point of view toward natural resources obtained in the Departments, and controlled the Governmental administrative machinery. Through the General Land Office and other Government bureaus, the public resources were being handled and disposed of in accordance with the small considerations of petty legal formalities, instead of for the large purposes of constructive development, and the habit of deciding, whenever possible, in favor of private interests against the public welfare was firmly fixed.

*The idea that our natural resources were inexhaustible still obtained, and there was as yet no real knowledge of their extent and condition. The relation of the conservation of natural resources to the problems of National welfare and National efficiency had not yet dawned on the public mind.*⁵⁷⁶

Roosevelt had a much larger, future-oriented vision centered on the wise use of land and wildlife as a key component of the nation's economic growth. Speaking to America's school-children on 15 April 1907, Arbor Day, he poignantly expressed the responsibility he felt to protect the natural resources of the United States for the use and enjoyment of future generations.

⁵⁷³ Irston R. Barnes, "T. R.'s Island Has Two Purposes," *Washington Post*, 2 August 1953.

⁵⁷⁴ Theodore Roosevelt's Seventh Annual Message to Congress, 3 December 1907, quoted in Theodore Roosevelt, "Conservation," *Theodore Roosevelt Cyclopedia*, 2d ed., ed. Albert Bushnell Hart and Herbert Ronald Ferleger (Oyster Bay, N.Y.: Theodore Roosevelt Association and Meckler Corp.; Westport, Conn.: Meckler Corp., 1989), 102.

⁵⁷⁵ Theodore Roosevelt, speaking before the National Editorial Association, Jamestown, Va., 10 June 1907, quoted in Theodore Roosevelt, "Conservation," *Theodore Roosevelt Cyclopedia*, 102.

⁵⁷⁶ Theodore Roosevelt, *An Autobiography* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1913), 430.

*We of an older generation can get along with what we have, though with growing hardship; but in your full manhood and womanhood you will want what nature once so bountifully supplied and man so thoughtlessly destroyed; and because of that want you will reproach us, not for what we have used, but for what we have wasted . . . So any nation which in its youth lives only for the day, reaps without sowing, and consumes without husbanding, must expect the penalty of the prodigal whose labor could with difficulty find him the bare means of life.*⁵⁷⁷

And again a year later speaking before the assembled state governors:

*We have become great because of the lavish use of our resources and we have just reason to be proud of our growth. But the time has come to enquire seriously what will happen when our forests are gone, when the coal, the iron, the oil, and the gas are exhausted, when the soils have been still further impoverished and washed into the streams, polluting the rivers, denuding the fields, and obstructing navigation. These questions do not relate only to the next century or the next generation. It is time for us now as a nation to exercise the same reasonable foresight that would be shown by any prudent man in conserving and wisely using the property which contains the assurance of well-being for himself and his children.*⁵⁷⁸

In keeping with this overarching goal, Roosevelt carried out the greatest series of conservation achievements in the history of the United States. Under his direction, almost 230 million acres of public land were placed under Federal protection. He established 150 national forests, fifty-one Federal bird reservations, four national game preserves, five national parks, and eighteen national monuments. Roosevelt also routinely pushed the boundaries of Executive authority. His March 1903 decision to declare Florida's Pelican Island the first Federal Bird Reservation came in response to the stalled efforts of a group of ornithologists, deeply concerned over the native egret population's ability to sustain itself in light of increasing pressure from plume hunters. Desperate, they appealed directly to the president. In considering this request, Roosevelt simply asked his Cabinet, "Is there any law that will prevent me from declaring Pelican Island a Federal Bird Reservation?" As the island was Federal property, there were no legal impediments, and so Roosevelt, quickly and without fanfare, simply stated, "Very well, then I so declare it."⁵⁷⁹

Likewise, Congress passed the Antiquities Act of 1906 as a means of allowing the president to safeguard culturally significant Federal lands through designation as National Monuments. While the law's intended use had been the protection of relatively small tracts of land, chiefly Native American structures and archeological sites, in its first application on 26 September 1906, Roosevelt used the Antiquities Act to create the 1347-acre Devil's Tower National Monument in northeast Wyoming. Of the remaining seventeen National Monuments established by Roosevelt,

⁵⁷⁷ Theodore Roosevelt, "Arbor Day – A Message to the School-Children of the United States," 15 April 1907, quoted in Theodore Roosevelt, "Arbor Day," *Theodore Roosevelt Cyclopedia*, 25.

⁵⁷⁸ Theodore Roosevelt, speech given at the Governors' Conference on the Conservation of Natural Resources, Washington, D.C., 13 May 1908, quoted in Theodore Roosevelt, "Conservation – Basis of," *Theodore Roosevelt Cyclopedia*, 102.

⁵⁷⁹ Edmund Morris, *Theodore Rex* (New York: Modern Library, 2002), 519.

all were over 500 acres in size at time of designation, with most exceeding 1,000 acres. Even more brazenly, in 1907 Roosevelt rushed through the authorization of 16 million acres of new National Forests, all in the six northwestern states, only days before Congress passed the Agricultural Appropriation Bill, prohibiting the president from setting aside any future National Forests in these states. Roosevelt thoroughly enjoyed thumbing his nose at those members of the Senate whom he termed “the friends of the special interests,” and who, in his words, “turned handsprings in their wrath” over his quick, efficient action.⁵⁸⁰

From 1902-06 Roosevelt also initiated twenty-eight irrigation projects under the Reclamation Act of 1902. The act reserved the proceeds from the sales of public land for the purposes of reclaiming the arid, useless areas of the American West through extensive irrigation efforts, thus creating additional habitable lands.⁵⁸¹ These projects, organized in 1908 under the new U.S. Reclamation Service, covered more than 3 million acres and served over 30,000 farms. Many of the dams required for this mammoth public works project ranked amongst the largest in the world.⁵⁸² Central Arizona’s Theodore Roosevelt Dam,⁵⁸³ dedicated in March 1911 by Roosevelt himself, was actually the largest masonry dam built to that point, utilizing 606,000 cubic yards of concrete. The basin that the dam created, known as Lake Roosevelt, has a storage capacity of 2,910,200 acre-feet (948,298,564,680 U.S. gallons) of water when full.⁵⁸⁴ Roosevelt was extremely proud of his work under the Reclamation Act, and held that “this Act and the results flowing from it have helped powerfully to prove to the Nation that it can handle its own resources and exercise direct and business-like control over them.”⁵⁸⁵

In order to further his conservation efforts, Roosevelt established the Public Lands Commission in 1902 and the Inland Waterways Commission in 1907. From 13-15 May 1908, he convened the Conference of Governors to consider the future of conservation in America. As a result of the conference he established the National Conservation Commission that June, which prepared the first inventory of the nation’s natural resources. In 1909, Roosevelt convened the first North American Conservation Congress, held in Washington, D.C., and attended by representatives from Canada, Newfoundland, Mexico, and the United States. A declaration of principles was issued calling for an international conservation congress, but unfortunately it was never held.⁵⁸⁶ Arguably Roosevelt’s greatest success, and certainly that which pleased him the most, was the establishment of America’s conservation philosophy itself, as this new viewpoint signaled a paradigm shift in how citizens viewed and utilized the nation’s natural resources. Gifford Pinchot, a forester whom Roosevelt had known from his time as governor of New York (and

⁵⁸⁰ Roosevelt, *An Autobiography*, 440.

⁵⁸¹ Ibid., 431.

⁵⁸² Ibid., 434.

⁵⁸³ The dam was officially known as “Salt River Dam #1” until 1959, when it was officially renamed in honor of Roosevelt. Since its dedication, however, it was unofficially known as the Roosevelt Dam.

⁵⁸⁴ For more information and statistics regarding the Theodore Roosevelt Dam, see U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, “Theodore Roosevelt Dam,” in *Reclamation: Managing Water in the West* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 2007), <http://www.usbr.gov/dataweb/dams/az10317.htm> (accessed 26 July 2007).

⁵⁸⁵ Roosevelt, *An Autobiography*, 434.

⁵⁸⁶ Theodore Roosevelt Association, “Conservation Commissions and Conferences under the Roosevelt Administration 1901-1909,” in *Theodore Roosevelt Association*, ed. Rogina L. Jeffries (Oyster Bay, N.Y.: Theodore Roosevelt Association, 2007), <http://www.theodoreroosevelt.org/life/trancher.htm> (accessed 29 June 2007).

who was already head of the Bureau of Forestry when he succeeded to the presidency) functioned as Roosevelt's principal natural resource advisor. Pinchot became the first chief of the U.S. Forest Service when that agency was established in 1905. According to Roosevelt, the need for this reorganization was clear.

When I became President, the Bureau of Forestry . . . was a small but growing organization, under Gifford Pinchot, occupied mainly with laying the foundation of American forestry by scientific study of the forests, and with the promotion of forestry on public lands. It contained all the trained foresters in the Government service, but had charge of no public timberland whatsoever. The Government forest reserves of the day were in the care of a Division in the General Land Office, under the management of clerks wholly without knowledge of forestry, few if any of whom had ever seen a foot of the timberlands for which they were responsible. Thus the reserves were neither well protected nor well used. There were no foresters among the men who had charge of the National Forests, and no Government forests in charge of the Government foresters.⁵⁸⁷

Pinchot, a consummate Progressive, advocated a national system of resource management based on utilitarian values, i.e. "the use of the natural resources for the greatest good of the greatest number for the longest time."⁵⁸⁸ His views corresponded perfectly with the overall Rooseveltian political dogma of social rights and the public good. Roosevelt viewed Pinchot as "the foremost leader in the great struggle to coordinate all our social and governmental forces in the effort to secure the adoption of a rational and farseeing policy for securing conservation of all our natural resources." Most importantly, he led the fight for what Roosevelt termed "preservation through use of our forests."⁵⁸⁹ This notion of preservation through use, carried out in the best interest of the American people, was the fundamental tenet of the conservation movement, and functioned as the basis for Pinchot's management of the nearly 194 million acres of National Forests under his control. While Pinchot and Roosevelt strongly opposed timber companies who sought to essentially wipe out vast tracts of these forests, both men also believed that the forests, as well as coal, water, and other natural resources, were best managed, as with any other resource, as economic tools. In short, it was not in the best interest of the American people to allow timber companies to completely exploit and thereby decimate the country's natural resources. Neither was it in their best interest to forgo the economic advantage gained through the scientific management of these resources by well-trained professionals acting for the public good. Pinchot therefore initiated a policy by which private interests could pay to log or otherwise develop the forests, but only under terms mandated by the U.S. Forest Service. Later in life he recalled the birth of the conservation movement and defended this viewpoint in no uncertain terms.

The first great fact about conservation is that it stands for development. There has been a fundamental misconception that conservation means nothing but the husbanding of resources for future generations. There could be no more serious mistake. Conservation does mean provision for the future, but it means also and first of all the recognition of the

⁵⁸⁷ Roosevelt, *An Autobiography*, 435.

⁵⁸⁸ Gifford Pinchot, "The Birth of 'Conservation,'" in Roderick Frazier Nash, *American Environmentalism: Readings In Conservation History* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1990), 75.

⁵⁸⁹ Roosevelt, *An Autobiography*, 429.

*right of the present generation to the fullest necessary use of all the resources with which this country is so abundantly blessed. Conservation demands the welfare of this generation first, and afterward the welfare of the generations to follow.*⁵⁹⁰

Roosevelt continually advocated the same position, perhaps most famously at a speech delivered at Osawatomie, Kansas, on 31 August 1910.

*Conservation means development as much as it does protection. I recognize the right and duty of this generation to develop and use the natural resources of our land; but I do not recognize the right to waste them, or to rob, by wasteful use, the generations that come after us. I ask nothing of the nation except that it so behave as each farmer here behaves with respect to his own children. That farmer is a poor creature who skins the land and leaves it worthless to his children. The farmer is a good farmer who, having enabled the land to support himself and to provide for the education of his children, leaves it a little better than he found it himself. I believe the same thing of a nation.*⁵⁹¹

The conservationist policy of wise use, often referred to as “multiple use,” was not the only popular philosophy regarding the management of natural resources during the early twentieth century. During this time, the naturalist John Muir became the leading advocate for the strict preservation of pristine natural areas. While conservation allowed, and actively encouraged, sustainable or selective harvesting of timber, coal, iron, oil, gas, and game animals, preservation demanded that these resources be left unspoiled and wild. Muir founded the Sierra Club in 1892 as a vehicle to carry the growing preservation movement onto the national stage, and to fight a proposed reduction in the boundaries of Yosemite National Park. Until his death in 1914, he passionately and eloquently championed the cause of preservation. While Muir initially worked cooperatively with Pinchot, both quickly concentrated their efforts on different objectives and came to symbolize two emerging camps within the nascent environmental movement. Though the terms “conservation” and “preservation” are often confused or used interchangeably in the present day, at the turn of the twentieth century they entailed fundamentally different, often contradictory, beliefs. The very fact that Roosevelt chose to explain conservation as “preservation through use” illustrates a fundamental difference between the two management systems, encapsulating different values, beliefs, and ethics.⁵⁹² Likewise, while Pinchot, the professional forester, employed scientific principles directed at people’s minds to endorse conservation, Muir, more poet than politic, appealed directly to their hearts in defense of preservation, and his impassioned entreaties often had a decidedly spiritual character. Muir, in particular, was unwavering in his mission of preserving America’s last great places, such as Yosemite and Yellowstone, those few remaining areas of perfect, pristine wilderness. Nevertheless, he was also a realist, and beyond these special retreats, he was far more accepting of Pinchot’s utilitarian values.⁵⁹³ Indeed, Muir flatly asserted that “timber is as necessary as

⁵⁹⁰ Pinchot, 76.

⁵⁹¹ Theodore Roosevelt, speech delivered at Osawatomie, Kan., 31 August 1910, quoted in Theodore Roosevelt, “Conservation,” *Theodore Roosevelt Cyclopedia*, 102.

⁵⁹² Roosevelt, *An Autobiography*, 429.

⁵⁹³ John M. Meyer, “Gifford Pinchot, John Muir, and the Boundaries of Politics in American Thought,” *Polity* 30, no. 2. (winter, 1997): 280.

bread, and no scheme of management failing to recognize and properly provide for this want can properly be maintained.”⁵⁹⁴ Muir was therefore neither as naïve as his critics have alleged nor as idealistic as his supporters have maintained. Instead, he correctly concluded that while continued development was both inevitable and necessary, certain select lands were sacrosanct, owing to their tremendous aesthetic and spiritual qualities. Couched in terms of Pinchot’s values, these treasures provided for the greatest good to the greatest number of citizens for the longest time simply by being left alone without the intrusion of the saw or bulldozer. Theodore Roosevelt agreed.

At the same time he was creating and implementing conservationist principles with Pinchot, Roosevelt was also actively forging an alliance with Muir. Unlike the national forests, commercial development was completely prohibited within the Federal bird reservations, national game preserves, national parks, and national monuments. Hunting and fishing were permitted solely as means of controlling animal populations, and logging was allowed only to prevent forest fires and maintain the scenic character of the landscape. These reservations were preserved in perpetuity solely for the use and enjoyment of the public. Roosevelt’s commitment to preservation is best exemplified through his refusal to authorize construction of a dam in Yosemite National Park’s Hetch Hetchy Valley. Despite his strong support for water reclamation throughout the American west, he twice denied, once in 1903 and again in 1905, plans to dam the valley on the grounds that the resulting environmental damage would not be in the public interest.⁵⁹⁵ The need to preserve was paramount, as it was when Roosevelt spoke at the Grand Canyon in May 1903.

*In the Grand Canyon, Arizona has a natural wonder which, so far as I know, is in kind absolutely unparalleled throughout the rest of the world. I want to ask you to do one thing in connection with it in your own interest and in the interest of the country – to keep this great wonder of nature as it now is . . . Leave it as it is. You can not improve upon it. The ages have been at work on it, and man can only mar it.*⁵⁹⁶

⁵⁹⁴ John Muir, *Our National Parks*, Sierra Edition, vol. VI (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1917), 34, quoted in Meyer, 277.

⁵⁹⁵ Despite John Muir’s national preservation campaign, authorization to dam Hetch Hetchy was given in 1913 (under the Taft Administration) and the O’Shaughnessy Dam was completed in 1923. The project created the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir and effectively destroyed the valley’s prevailing scenic and environmental attributes. Although a defeat, the fight for Hetch Hetchy is widely considered the seminal moment in American environmentalism, as it galvanized support for a genuine national movement in support of natural areas. Three months after passing the Raker Act, the bill authorizing the dam’s construction, Congress amended the National Park Act to prohibit future hydroelectric projects within National Parks. This decision was largely born out of the intense public displeasure brought on by the decision to dam Hetch Hetchy.

⁵⁹⁶ Theodore Roosevelt, speech delivered at the Grand Canyon, 6 May 1903, quoted in Theodore Roosevelt, “Grand Canyon,” *Theodore Roosevelt Cyclopedia*, 217.

3. Naturalistic Landscape Design in the National Park Service⁵⁹⁷

Although the National Park Service was officially established on 25 August 1916, nearly seventeen years would lapse before it fully developed policies for managing America's natural and cultural resources. During this time the agency's duties and responsibilities were refined and the overall mission statement incorporated into practical directives. In particular, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.'s contributions to the philosophical underpinning of the role of the National Park Service were substantial.⁵⁹⁸ Due in large part to his efforts, and those of fellow landscape architect Henry V. Hubbard, by 1932 the NPS Landscape Division had developed a set of general design objectives that could be applied to any site within the agency's purview.⁵⁹⁹ As Olmsted was primarily concerned with protecting the "beauty, dignity and nobility of national park landscapes," the work subscribed to a naturalistic design methodology, by which the improvements were intended to be as unobtrusive as possible and harmonize with existing landscape features.⁶⁰⁰ Writing in 1935, NPS Director Arno B. Cammerer summarized this intent.

*In any area in which the preservation of the beauty of Nature is a primary purpose, every modification of the natural landscape, whether it be by construction of a road or erection of shelter, is an intrusion. A basic objective of those who are entrusted with the development of such areas for the human uses for which they are established, is, it seems to me, to hold these intrusions to a minimum and so to design them that, besides being attractive to look upon, they appear to belong to and be a part of their settings.*⁶⁰¹

Beginning in 1933 and continuing until the early 1940s, New Deal programs supplied the necessary mechanism for one of the greatest periods of growth and expansion in NPS history. Simultaneously, the strong focus on naturalistic landscape design resulted in the profusion of rustic architecture, interpretative exhibits, and general plans emblematic of this era, and which in large measure still shape visitor experience at many NPS sites in the present day.

Olmsted's design of Theodore Roosevelt Island is, in most respects, an individual application of this larger contextual framework. While specific details and particular methods varied greatly between parks, the NPS mandated certain aesthetic standards for all improvements so as to minimize their visual impact on the natural environment. Inconspicuous roads, grading, buildings, scenic overlooks, bridges, and trails were all encouraged, as were rounded and flattened slopes, indigenous construction materials, concealed parking lots, and meandering routes rather than long linear spans or paths turning on sharp angles. Olmsted developed

⁵⁹⁷ The following discussion is only a short summation of the role naturalistic landscape design played in the NPS during the agency's early history, with specific inferences drawn to Olmsted's work on Theodore Roosevelt Island. For a more thorough examination of the subject see Linda Flint McClelland, *Presenting Nature: The Historic Landscape Design of the National Park Service, 1916 to 1942* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, 1993).

⁵⁹⁸ American Academy for Park & Recreation Administration.

⁵⁹⁹ Although Olmsted and Hubbard crafted much of the macroscopic design ideology for natural park landscapes, Thomas Chalmers Vint led the landscape division as chief landscape architect of the National Park Service. In this role Vint directed the landscape preservation and harmonious design projects that proliferated during the 1930s.

⁶⁰⁰ American Academy for Park & Recreation Administration.

⁶⁰¹ Arno B. Cammerer quoted in McClelland, 195.

Theodore Roosevelt Island without roads, and hence without the need for parking lots, an ideal often espoused at NPS sites, but almost never implemented due to the practical necessity of public access. Regarding grade changes, he incorporated the island's existing topography; as Olmsted explained, all that was needed was "the smoothing out of some minor scars resulting from former human uses."⁶⁰² The comfort station designed by Charles R. Wait was the only building constructed in conjunction with the Olmsted design, and it is small, simple, and functional.

The first scenic overlooks created for national parks were designed according to the natural contours of the site, and were usually built atop a plateau or promontory. Later, designers began creating artificial terraces using dry-laid retaining walls or gradual earthen embankments sloping downward to meet the surrounding terrain.⁶⁰³ The unrealized outlook terrace at Theodore Roosevelt Island would have combined these two basic types, as its location and overall shape were dictated by the island's central plateau, but was to be supported by a native stone retaining wall surrounded by a secondary lower wall, which would have terminated to the east and west in a flight of steps with appropriate piers.⁶⁰⁴ Henry V. Hubbard, who collaborated with Olmsted on the design of the outlook terrace, favored the use of scenic overlooks throughout his career, and encouraged landscape designers to create rises in elevation that allowed for commanding views of the larger landscape.⁶⁰⁵ Given its proximity to Washington's monumental core and the Virginia shore, had the outlook terrace been built it would likely have proved a particularly impressive application of this general principle.

In the early 1920s, NPS landscape engineers began considering bridge construction based on the suitability of materials and design for natural sites, the workmanship of masonry or logwork, and the degree to which each bridge harmonized with its setting.⁶⁰⁶ Bridges constructed according to naturalistic design principles were also increasingly streamlined and simplified, often lacking any sort of decoration. In non-wooden bridges, specifications for the facing stones and railings required that at least 28-50 percent of the wall be formed by stones with weathered or quarried surfaces, and that these stones were to be of varying sizes and irregularly laid.⁶⁰⁷ Olmsted subscribed to this basic design intent at Theodore Roosevelt Island. Although he did not develop any specific plans due to the ongoing debate on where to locate the bridge(s) and funding shortfalls, Olmsted repeatedly stressed that any bridge connecting with the island should "be a simple, unassertive, modest-looking affair." He preferred a pontoon bridge at the southern end of the island, certain that it could be made to fit its place in the landscape far more agreeably than any fixed structure.⁶⁰⁸

The National Park Service also produced instructions for creating appropriate pedestrian and horseback routes through the national parks. By the 1920s, the landscape division was becoming

⁶⁰² Olmsted, Jr., "Draft of Preliminary Report upon a Plan for the Permanent Development of Roosevelt Island."

⁶⁰³ McClelland, 125.

⁶⁰⁴ Olmsted Brothers, "Report to the Roosevelt Memorial Association."

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid., 124.

⁶⁰⁶ McClelland, 129.

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid., 130.

⁶⁰⁸ Olmsted, Jr., "Draft of Preliminary Report upon a Plan for the Permanent Development of Roosevelt Island."

more and more concerned about the visual compatibility of trails with their surroundings and significant natural features.⁶⁰⁹ Most previous circulation measures had been simply laid out on the ground according to the most expedient means of connecting one point of interest to the next, with little regard to scenic quality. The net result often gave an artificial and intrusive appearance, featuring long monotonous stretches and sharp turns. Where stairways, ramps, railings, and raised walkways were needed, there was generally little effort made to harmonize these elements with their surroundings, or even utilize colors that would have allowed them to blend in with the background landscape. The new methodology directed that trail improvements incorporate natural curvilinear lines, and according to NPS historian Linda Flint McClelland, “at once followed nature and blended inconspicuously with the natural setting.”⁶¹⁰ The overall goal was to minimize the impact of the trails themselves and, as much as possible, allow visitors to feel that they were simply strolling through nature. Olmsted fashioned the trails on Theodore Roosevelt Island according to these new design precepts, using a stone and gravel foundation to provide support for an approximately 4” deep top layer composed mainly of sandy loam. In Olmsted’s report to the RMA on 15 June 1934, he wrote that “in general the ultimate appearance of the foot-trails and bridle paths is intended to resemble much more nearly that of foot-worn forest trails, somewhat irregular in width and alignment and surface, than that of the formal paths usual in urban parks.”⁶¹¹ A month later Olmsted expanded on this description in a letter to Hermann Hagedorn.

*In course of time, small plants will be encouraged to encroach so far as the actual wear and tear of foot travel and occasional service trucks may permit. A slightly irregular and ragged edge to the trails, thus determined by actual wear, as in woodland trails of the agreeable sorts which come into existence solely by the movements of people and animals along them where the natural soils are firm and reasonably well drained seems highly desirable.*⁶¹²

While Olmsted’s work on the island’s infrastructure was important, his most significant, and naturalistic, contribution to its transformation was undoubtedly the CCC reforestation. Although scenic beautification had informed plantings in national parks since at least the 1920s, and ecological principles began gaining widespread acceptance in the early 1930s, the majority of these projects were relatively small-scale, and focused on individual pockets of vegetation or informal roadside arrangements. The reforestation of Theodore Roosevelt Island, however, took place on a much larger scale. Further, while other NPS projects sought to harmonize new plantings within the existing landscape through the use of native species and informal arrangements designed to mimic natural establishment, very few aimed to recreate particular conditions at a specific moment in time. The magnitude of the island’s reforestation, coupled

⁶⁰⁹ McClelland, 137.

⁶¹⁰ Ibid., 140.

⁶¹¹ Frederick Law Olmsted, “Theodore Roosevelt Island: Outline of Projected Improvement Work by the C.C.C.”

⁶¹² Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. to Hermann Hagedorn, Brookline, Mass., 16 July 1935, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

with the explicit goal of restoring its pre-settlement appearance, set Theodore Roosevelt Island apart from nearly all other contemporaneous naturalistic design projects.⁶¹³

4. Theodore Roosevelt Island as Part of American Environmental History

The very decision to emulate the “primaeval forest” of pre-settlement North America, especially on a site as large and prominent as Theodore Roosevelt Island, represents a seminal moment in American environmental history. It is emblematic of both the nation’s rapidly changing opinions regarding nature, as well as man’s relationship with the natural world during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The primeval forest, the landscape that greeted the first permanent European settlers to America during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, was in most respects a harsh and inhospitable place. The somewhat apocryphal tale of the first Thanksgiving teaches children how the Puritans of Plymouth Colony nearly starved to death during the winter of 1620, and the very real “lost colony” of Roanoke Island, where all 128 settlers mysteriously vanished ca. 1590, attest to the serious dangers that colonists faced. Most arrived with meager supplies, totally unaware of how difficult it would be to establish themselves and simply survive. William Bradford, a leader in the Plymouth Colony, recorded that upon arrival they encountered nothing “but a hideous and desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts and wild men,” and that “the whole country full of woods & thickets, represented a wild & savage hue.”⁶¹⁴ This view of nature, while reasonable given their life-threatening situation, was also the product of a belief structure that for thousands of years had set nature, i.e. the “wilderness,” apart from proper, civilized society. The uninhabited land past the edges of town and beyond the farmstead was the domain of werewolves, witches, and, most importantly for the Puritans, the Devil himself.

They were, however, only the most extreme example of the onrushing tide of Christian civilization to the New World, and all of these colonists brought with them a distinctly anthropocentric worldview born out of their religious beliefs. According to Biblical tradition, man named all the animals, thus establishing his dominion over them. Moreover, although man’s body is made of clay, he is not simply part of nature: he is made “in God’s image.” According to this hierarchy, Christianity “not only established a dualism of man and nature, but also insisted that it is God’s will that man exploit nature for his proper ends.”⁶¹⁵ The American wilderness quickly became not only something to be feared, but also conquered and subdued, on both

⁶¹³ Only battlefield restoration, which became increasingly popular during the 1930s due to active public interest and a ready supply of CCC workers, met or eclipsed the scale of work undertaken at Theodore Roosevelt Island. These projects, however, invariably couched landscape restoration within the relatively narrow framework of increased historical accuracy and interpretation. While the island’s restoration assuredly involved historical themes, both in its return to a pre-settlement appearance and as living memorial to Theodore Roosevelt, Olmsted assured that it moved beyond a strict historical focus and functioned as a large-scale application of naturalistic landscape design. An understanding of pre-colonial history or an appreciation for Roosevelt was and is not necessary to enjoy one’s time on the island. Conversely, battlefield parks, both then and now, manage their respective landscapes with the primary focus on interpreting the battles themselves.

⁶¹⁴ William Bradford, “William Bradford Faces a ‘Hideous and Desolate Wilderness,’ 1620-1635,” in *Major Problems in American Environmental History: Documents and Essays*, ed. Carolyn Merchant (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath, 1993), 68.

⁶¹⁵ Lynn White, Jr., “The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis,” *Science* 155, no. 3767 (10 March 1967): 1205.

religious and economic grounds. In the words of John Winthrop on the occasion of the founding of the Massachusetts Bay Company in 1629:

*The whole earth is the Lord's garden, and he has given it to the sons of man upon a condition [Genesis 1:28]: Increase and multiply replenish the earth and subdue it . . . why then should we stay here [England] striving for places to live (many men sometimes spending as much labor and money to recover or keep an acre or two of land as would secure many hundred acres of equally good or better land in another country), and meanwhile allow a whole continent . . . to lie empty and unimproved.*⁶¹⁶

This basic belief, that Americans had not only the right but also the moral duty to expand and consume the nation's land and natural resources, was repeated many times throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, eventually culminating in the principle of Manifest Destiny. The phrase, first used in 1845, came to represent the general ideology of expansionism and the specific belief that the borders of the United States were destined to extend from the Atlantic seaboard to the Pacific Ocean. Divergent voices, however, were heard as early as the 1820s, when American novelist James Fenimore Cooper began publishing his *Leatherstocking Tales*. The five novels, first released 1823-41, center on the fictional character Natty Bumpo, a pioneer on America's western frontier who not only personifies the manly virtues and rugged self-reliance that Theodore Roosevelt would later come to idealize and personify, but also a genuine concern for the natural world.⁶¹⁷ Speaking through Bumpo, Cooper asked his readers in 1827 to

*look around you, men; what will the Yankee Choppers say, when they have cut their path from the eastern to the western waters, and find that a hand, which can lay the 'arth bare at a blow, has been here and swept the country, in very mockery of their wickedness. They will turn on their tracks like a fox that doubles, and then the rank smell of their own footsteps will show them the madness of their waste. Howsomever, these are thoughts that are more likely to rise in him who has seen the folly of eighty seasons, than to teach wisdom to men still bent on the pleasures of their kind!*⁶¹⁸

This idea, that nature held goodness as well as wickedness, surfaced repeatedly during the remainder of the nineteenth century. It is evident in the pastoral landscape paintings of Thomas Cole and the Hudson River School, as well as the Transcendentalist writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, who sought out God in encounters with the Sublime. Likewise, Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. and his contemporaries followed the example of Andrew Jackson Downing in seeking out the integration of human and natural landscapes through park

⁶¹⁶ John Winthrop, "John Winthrop Quotes Genesis on Subduing the Earth, 1629," in *Major Problems in American Environmental History*, 72.

⁶¹⁷ For more information on James Fenimore Cooper and his writings in the context of American views toward nature, see Otis B. Wheeler, "Faulkner's Wilderness," *American Literature* 31, no. 2. (May 1959): 127-36; James Fenimore Cooper Society, *The James Fenimore Cooper Society*, ed. Hugh C. MacDougall (Cooperstown, N.Y.: James Fenimore Cooper Society, 2007), <http://external.oneonta.edu/cooper/index.html> (accessed 12 September 2007).

⁶¹⁸ James Fenimore Cooper, *The Prairie: A Tale*, ed. James P. Elliot (New York: State University of New York Press, 1985), 76.

design. George Perkins Marsh emerged as the first serious student of ecology, stressing the negative impacts of human action on the environment. Mainstream America, however, largely continued along the traditional anthropocentric line of treating nature solely as tool for economic growth. Technological innovations allowed for both a marked increase in the rate of resource extraction and a decrease in the time spent delivering these resources to markets and factories. The cumulative result of these factors brought about the disastrous environmental conditions that Theodore Roosevelt encountered during his time in the Badlands. Finally, in 1893 historian Frederick Jackson Turner published his seminal essay *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*, in which he argued that the concept of the western frontier, that place where culture met wilderness, had always played a profound role in shaping a collective American identity. He further stated that the nearly three centuries of westward expansion had finally closed the frontier, and that Americans faced the distressing reality of losing the source of their national character.⁶¹⁹

The widespread dissemination of Turner's frontier thesis, coupled with the growing influence of Pinchot and Muir and the ascendancy of Theodore Roosevelt to the office of president of the United States, helped create a sea change in American environmental thought at the turn of the twentieth century. While nature still functioned as a foil to humanity, the prospect of its loss created an increasingly idealistic view of past experiences and an interest in revisiting them in the current times. The birth and maturation of the National Park Service is the most obvious outgrowth of this thinking, but it can also be seen in such diverse topics as the architectural Arts and Crafts movement and the proliferation of the natural sciences as academic disciplines.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the nation was in serious jeopardy of losing its few remaining natural treasures to commercial development, and the notion of recreating past landscapes had hardly even been considered. By the time the RMA purchased Analostan Island in 1931, American environmental thought had progressed to such a point that the conscious and deliberate restoration of the site's natural conditions seemed entirely appropriate. The concept of the primeval forest had changed completely, from Bradford's "hideous and desolate wilderness" to a fitting memorial for a former president and a leisurely place to while away a Sunday afternoon. According to the RMA:

*More than the memorial to a distinctive and beloved President of the United States is involved here. The Association has given the nation the makings of a monument not only to Theodore Roosevelt but also to the primeval America that the explorers and first settlers saw when they came to these shores: a monument, unique in character, kindling the imagination and capable of lifting the hearts of men for centuries to come – if people will only be patient while the monument is achieving its stature, and keep the hands of the despoiler off it.*⁶²⁰

⁶¹⁹ Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*, ed. Harold P. Simonson (New York: Ungar, 1963).

⁶²⁰ Roosevelt Memorial Association, untitled publication regarding RMA's intent for the island, ca. 1951-52, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

5. The Presidential Memorial Tradition and the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial

As with the island as a whole, the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial designed by architect Eric Gugler and sculptor Paul Manship also enjoys a rich contextual association, in this case as a crucial step in the continuing evolution of an architectural style befitting national memorials. From the 1880s to 1940s, American architects designed memorials in the Classical architectural style, particularly during the period 1885-1920 when the influence of the Beaux-Arts movement was strongest. Memorials of this era were most often dedicated as military monuments or to honor national heroes, particularly presidents. Individual memorials often functioned as American adaptations of architectural forms dating to the periods of Greek and Roman antiquity. The Jefferson Memorial, modeled after conventional Greek temple design, is one of the best known examples of this easily recognizable type of memorial. Such monuments were typically situated on the highest point of the landscape as the terminus of a formalized approach, oriented according to the four cardinal compass points. A single, cylindrical chamber dominated the interior, with a domed roof rising above a large statue representing the person honored. As architectural historian Kay Fanning notes, “The memorials often had marble exteriors, with limestone or some similar stone used on the interior. Inscriptions derived from the president’s speeches or writings played a major role, often appearing over the entrance and carved on walls or tablets surrounding the central space.”⁶²¹

Following World War I, architects, historians, and the general public increasingly criticized this traditional approach to architectural memorialization. During the 1920s and 1930s, Progressive ideals, combined with the rising popularity of modernist architecture, led designers to seek out new forms that moved away from somber, traditional structures toward “living memorials.” Fanning identifies the latter as those “structures or institutions which could make a vital contribution to the health and progress of modern society,” such as playgrounds, schools, and public auditoriums.⁶²² World War II essentially finalized this architectural shift, as the romantic character of Classical architecture was no longer regarded as appropriate in light of the recent devastation and the growing specter of nuclear annihilation. When the Jefferson Memorial, the last major national monument to employ the Classical style, was completed in 1943, it was already an outmoded historical anachronism, while the definition of appropriate national memorials continued to grow and expand.⁶²³

Designed in 1961 and dedicated in 1967, the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial is a particularly illustrative example of this transition away from Classical architecture in the creation of national memorials. It simultaneously recalls this past tradition and foreshadows new memorialization efforts accomplished later in the twentieth century. Although the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial’s principal elements are distinctly modern given their simple, plain appearance, they are also derivatives of their classical predecessors. The memorial is essentially a modernistic version of the earlier Beaux-Arts presidential memorial. While an open-air plaza takes the place of the domed chamber, the overall effect is largely the same: a sense of inclusion as one steps within the boundaries of the memorial. Fanning also explains that the Theodore Roosevelt

⁶²¹ Fanning, 59.

⁶²² Ibid.

⁶²³ Ibid., 60.

Memorial also retains several key aspects of earlier memorial architecture, most notably “the major and minor axes, the orientation to cardinal points, and the central heroic statue, flanked by tablets bearing inscribed quotations.”⁶²⁴ Moreover, the trail leading from the edge of the island up to the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, while much less ostentatious than previous processional routes, serves the same function. Thick woods screen the memorial until the trail turns left, lining up on axis with the statue and providing a striking view of the entire memorial, raised on a slight but perceptible elevation.

Conversely, its very placement on Theodore Roosevelt Island, itself a living memorial in the truest sense, sets the memorial apart from the Classical architectural tradition. Previous national memorials were intended to impress upon the visitor a sense of reverential awe and admiration for the accomplishments and sacrifices celebrated therein. While the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial is likewise impressive and commands respect, it, like the man, is also much more approachable. Where the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials are essentially shrines, complete with signs requesting quiet respect, the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial invites picnics, bird watchers, hikers, and children at play. Further, its open design also prefigures more recent presidential memorials – the Lyndon Baines Johnson Memorial Grove on the Potomac (dedicated 1974), further south along the George Washington Memorial Parkway, and the expansive national memorial to Franklin Delano Roosevelt (completed in 1997) on the west side of the Tidal Basin.⁶²⁵ The former is particularly obvious as an outgrowth of the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial. Lyndon Johnson, whose own conservation work is second only to Roosevelt’s among all presidents, is honored with a naturalistically planted grove that recalls Olmsted’s reforestation of Theodore Roosevelt Island. Serpentine trails wind through the seventeen-acre site, amid white pine and dogwood trees, azaleas and rhododendrons, culminating not in a statue of the former president, but rather a massive, roughly carved granite megalith. The Theodore Roosevelt Memorial represents the precursor to this design.⁶²⁶

PART II. PHYSICAL INFORMATION

A. Landscape Character and Description Summary

Theodore Roosevelt Island is located in the Potomac River between Washington, D.C., to the west and Rosslyn, Virginia, to the east. The island is also situated on the fall line, a low east-facing cliff running from New Jersey to South Carolina that separates the hard Piedmont bedrock to the west from the softer, sandy Coastal Plain to the east.⁶²⁷ Upon reaching the island, the river forms two channels. The narrow channel to the west is commonly known as the Little River while the larger channel to the east remains the Potomac River and is sometimes referred to as the Georgetown Channel. The island itself is an outcropping of micaceous schist covered with sedimentary soils. Over the last 200 years, soil deposits from the river have increased the island’s

⁶²⁴ Ibid., 61.

⁶²⁵ Ibid.

⁶²⁶ Ibid.

⁶²⁷ U.S. Dept. of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey, “The Fall Line,” in *A Tapestry of Time and Terrain: The Union of Two Maps – Geology and Topography* (Reston, Va.: U.S. Geological Survey, 2007), <http://tapestry.usgs.gov/features/14fallline.html> (accessed 5 September 2007).

size by about twenty acres, from seventy to its current size of approximately 88.5 acres.⁶²⁸ A raised plateau extends lengthwise across the island, tapering at the north and south ends. Theodore Roosevelt Island can be further divided into four distinct landscape areas, determined on the basis of topography, historical use, and the Olmsted plans: the north (including the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial) and south portions of the plateau, marsh and swamp, and Little Island (Figure 1).⁶²⁹ The swamp occupies the peninsula located on the island's east side, originating in the northeast corner and extending south. A narrow tidal inlet separates this peninsula from the main body of the island. Little Island is a discrete island of approximately 1.5 acres located immediately southeast of the larger island. Although an island itself, it is included within the legal boundaries of Theodore Roosevelt Island, and has also been known historically as "Small Island," "South Island," and "Swan Island."⁶³⁰

Theodore Roosevelt Island is a special place. Consciously designed by landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. and his associate Henry V. Hubbard as a restoration of the original, pre-settlement "primaeval forest" typical of the region, it successfully blends the boundaries between the often conflicting spheres of nature and culture. Throughout the creation and implementation of their design, Olmsted and Hubbard repeatedly stressed the importance of mimicking nature: harmonizing new vegetation with pre-existing specimens, utilizing native species, organizing plantings in naturalistic arrangements (bunches, groves, etc.) rather than linear or regularly spaced rows, laying trails in gentle, meandering routes instead of direct lines of movement with sharp corners, and recognizing the importance of bird and animal habitat. The island is a designed cultural landscape and an integral, if often overlooked, component of the District's monumental core. It was among the final components of the 1902 McMillan Plan to be completed, represents one of Olmsted's most complete expressions of a scenic landscape, and remains innovative through his decision to foster the island's continuing evolution toward a climax forest ecosystem.⁶³¹ In a very real and tangible way, the island has grown up as a natural landscape, exactly as Olmsted intended. Visitors to the island are regularly surprised that such a place exists within the urbanized area of metropolitan Washington, D.C. Once inside the island's perimeter, it is often easier to imagine oneself in a sparsely populated rural area rather than the national capital. Further, as the most significant structure on the island, the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial complements the surrounding landscape rather than detracting from it. While other National Park Service sites and privately designed landscapes have combined nature and culture in their designs, few if any have done so at such a large scale and in such explicit terms as that of Theodore Roosevelt Island. It challenges the very meanings of nature and culture, which in both common and professional usage are often thought of as mutually exclusive concepts.

⁶²⁸ Fanning, 1. The official land transfer order conveying Theodore Roosevelt Island from the RMA to the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital records the island's area at 88.34 acres. This total includes the adjacent Little Island to the south, listed at 1.547 acres, which although a discrete island is included within the legal boundaries of Theodore Roosevelt Island. See Grant III, Land Transfer Order No. 13. Seventeenth century land records listed the island at approximately seventy-five acres. See, Netherton, "Delicate Beauty," 1.

⁶²⁹ Fanning, 5.

⁶³⁰ Netherton, "Delicate Beauty," 1.

⁶³¹ Fanning, 30.

B. Character Defining Features

1. Natural Features

a. Topography

The addition of some twenty acres of alluvial soil to Theodore Roosevelt Island during the past 200 years constitutes the most significant alteration to the island's topography. Most of the accumulation has taken place along the island's east side, as the moderately slow movement of the Potomac River has allowed deposits to build up, while the faster moving Little River has had the opposite effect, scouring a deeper channel between the island and the Virginia coast. The swamp, already part of the island's landscape during the Mason era, has been greatly enlarged through this action, changing from a relatively small feature confined to the northeast coastline, to a much larger expanse dominating the entire east side of the island through the formation of the peninsula. Likewise, Little Island also appears to have been built up through this gradual siltation, emerging above the waterline in the late nineteenth century. Evidence suggests that all of Theodore Roosevelt Island may have been formed in this manner. During his 1811 visit David Bailie Warden noted:

Annalostan Island is evidently of modern formation. In searching for water, a mass of trees was discovered at the depth of fifteen feet. General Mason instructed a workman (Brian Duffy) to cut through them. After having removed several of dimensions, he threw aside his axe, swearing by J---s 'that he now met huge ones with their tops upwards.' In other places, water was found at the depth of twenty-five or thirty feet. The highest eminence, on which the house stands, is fifty feet above the level of the river. The common tide rises to the height of three feet.⁶³²

That such large trees were discovered at a depth of 15' suggests that they had once been growing on the surface and slowly buried as soil accumulated and the island gradually rose over a period of hundreds, if not thousands, of years. At present, the island has two high points, both 44' above sea level, one located on the north plateau and the other on the south at the former site of the Mason mansion.⁶³³ The elevation descends from these two points outward to the island's perimeter, meeting the water with sandy beaches in some locations and ending several feet above the waterline in others. These conditions generally correspond with Warden's description, which he provided only as an estimation of the island's topography and not precise measurements of specific features.

Olmsted undertook very few alterations to the island's grade, preferring to maintain the existing conditions wherever visitor use would allow. The present conditions are therefore largely a combination of the island's natural topography, and whatever alterations John Mason may have accomplished in creating his plantations and pleasure gardens. Olmsted, however, expressed considerable concern over the treatment of the island's banks below high tide level, as this detail

⁶³² Warden, 136.

⁶³³ Fanning, 1.

was “of much potential influence for good or for bad upon the ultimate landscape character of the island shore.”⁶³⁴ He concluded that where these margins were taken up with rocky deposits, such as on the north edge of the island, there was not a serious problem. Elsewhere, however, the receding tide exposed bare mud flats, “distinctly unpleasant accompaniments of the otherwise lovely views across the [Little and Potomac] rivers from a pathway under the shore trees.”⁶³⁵ While Olmsted advocated periodically dredging out the flats to below the low-water mark, he rejected the possibility of erecting a rigid retaining wall around the island. Although this procedure, previously completed at the nearby Potomac Park, would have prevented the buildup of sediments, Olmsted feared that it “would be distressingly out of character with the picturesque and irregular naturalness of the forest margin.”⁶³⁶ Instead, he planned on utilizing irregular rocks of relatively large size to prevent this accumulation, while simulating the appearance of a natural rocky shore.⁶³⁷ Olmsted hoped to experiment with this plan once sufficient funding was made available, but the money was never delivered. Consequently, no major shoreline treatment has ever been carried out on Theodore Roosevelt Island, and the mud flats remain.

b. Vegetation

Under Olmsted’s direction, CCC crews planted or transplanted 35,736 native trees, shrubs, ferns, and other small plants on Theodore Roosevelt Island. Existing trees and other types of desirable vegetation were also incorporated into the reforestation. Olmsted and Hubbard rarely referenced specific plants in their plans or correspondence, as from the outset the project was focused on large-scale arrangements, with trees usually planted in groups and smaller understory vegetation often planted by the hundreds or thousands. Furthermore, the actual planting carried out by the CCC crews does not appear to have been conducted in any rigidly defined way. Rather, the workers were simply told to plant a certain number of a species in a specific area, sometimes with general guidelines regarding which were to be placed near one another or in relation to existing landscape features (Appendix 1).⁶³⁸ Beyond the practical impossibility of determining where each specific plant should be located, this approach facilitated varied planting arrangements and allowed the landscape to appear as if it had naturally evolved. This concept constituted Olmsted’s primary goal for Theodore Roosevelt Island: the creation of a native climax forest as a living memorial to the conservationist president, modeled after region’s natural, primeval forest. In June 1935, he gave a general statement describing how he planned to accomplish this objective.

Broadly speaking, the purposes of the planting now proposed are these: first, to fill in with young trees of large-growing forest species appropriate to the locality, the numerous spaces, some small and some very large, between the existing remnants of old woodland and among and under the scattered trees which have sprung up as volunteers in the old clearings between these woodlands since the abandonment of cultivation on the Island during the 19th Century; second, to add flowering dogwoods and other small-

⁶³⁴ Olmsted, Jr., “Draft of Preliminary Report upon a Plan for the Permanent Development of Roosevelt Island.”

⁶³⁵ Ibid.

⁶³⁶ Ibid.

⁶³⁷ Ibid.

⁶³⁸ Olmsted Brothers, “Roosevelt Memorial Island, Washington, D.C.: Notes to Accompany Plan No.”

growing native forest trees for enrichment and diversification; third, in limited areas, to add forest undergrowth shrubs where desirable for obtaining the appearance of intricacy characteristic of natural forests in this region and for limiting the sweep of views in undesirable directions. To avoid an appearance of artificial monotony for many years to come it is proposed to plant trees of various sizes, some as large as are ordinarily used in street tree planting, the rest of smaller and cheaper sizes.⁶³⁹

Previously, in May 1934, Olmsted gave a preliminary listing of the trees that he considered appropriate for such a forest: tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), white and black oaks (*Quercus* sp.), plane trees (*Platanus* sp.), river birch (*Betula nigra*), sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), maples (*Acer* sp.), ashes (*Fraxinus* sp.), hickories (*Carya* sp.), and elms (*Ulmus* sp.). Olmsted also noted that the evergreen magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*), and “a great variety of interesting trees of secondary importance,” including sassafras, persimmons, locusts, dogwoods, and redbuds, could be utilized. Additionally, this list included several species of conifers; not only the pines (*Pinus* spp.) and red cedars (*Juniperus virginiana*) commonly found throughout the region, but also other pines and hemlocks (*Tsuga* sp.) “more generally associated with the mountains to the westward but frequently migrating down the river.”⁶⁴⁰ Regarding understory vegetation, Olmsted recommended planting or retaining crossvine (*Bignonia capreolata*), grapevines (*Vitis* sp.), trumpet vines (*Campsis radicans*), certain shrubs (such as viburnum, *Viburnum* sp.), and a wide variety of ferns and small woody plants.⁶⁴¹

Olmsted also desired the “complete eradication” of several species that he considered undesirable weeds, namely blackberry (*Rubus* sp.), sumac (*Rhus* sp.), Joe-Pye-weed (*Eupatorium fistulosum*), and poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*). He was particularly adamant about eliminating the invasive exotic Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), which he judged a “pernicious and dangerous weed in a woodland” since it climbs, strangles, and suffocates young trees.⁶⁴² Much of the early CCC clearing efforts were directed specifically against this species, and while it was never completely removed from the island, continual weeding throughout the 1930s and 1940s significantly reduced its range and impact.⁶⁴³ However, periodic funding shortages often allowed the species to reestablish itself and damage young trees.⁶⁴⁴ Although Japanese honeysuckle is still present on the island, a second invasive exotic, English ivy (*Hedera helix*), has since severely limited its range. Lindsey K. Thomas, an NPS research biologist, predicted this outcome in 1980, observing: “*Hedera* is outcompeting *Lonicera*, and it is projected that it will dominate the vine community.”⁶⁴⁵

⁶³⁹ Olmsted, Jr., “Theodore Roosevelt Island: Outline of Projected Improvement Work by the C.C.C.”

⁶⁴⁰ Olmsted, Jr., “Draft of Preliminary Report upon a Plan for the Permanent Development of Roosevelt Island.”

⁶⁴¹ Fanning, 10.

⁶⁴² Olmsted, Jr., “Draft of Preliminary Report upon a Plan for the Permanent Development of Roosevelt Island.”

⁶⁴³ While Olmsted directed the CCC crews to eliminate as much of the honeysuckle as possible, “islands of this growth” apparently remained. See “Hardwood Forest Decided Upon for Roosevelt Island,” *Washington Star*, 6 August 1934.

⁶⁴⁴ Olmsted, Jr., “Theodore Roosevelt Island: Memorandum Report of Visit by F.L. Olmsted.”

⁶⁴⁵ Lindsey K. Thomas, *The Impact of Three Exotic Plant Species on a Potomac Island* (U.S. Department of the Interior, NPS Scientific Monograph Series No. 13, 1980): 76.

English ivy was already established on Theodore Roosevelt Island as a remnant of the Mason-era plantings when Olmsted began the reforestation project, but unlike Japanese honeysuckle he did not seek to eliminate it. On the contrary, he asserted that the plant, as well as scattered pockets of periwinkle, another groundcover species remaining from the nineteenth century, were “so agreeable in themselves and relatively so unassertive that they should be preserved rather than removed,” despite the fact that the ivy was “climbing into some of the trees.” The decision to retain these two non-native species represents Olmsted’s only significant departure from his goal of restoring an indigenous climax community on the island. It is particularly puzzling given the zeal with which he sought to remove not only the Japanese honeysuckle, but all other aspects of former human occupancy, including the Mason house ruins and the few “conspicuously exotic and ‘gardenesque’” trees such as Catalpas (*Catalpa* sp.) and Paulownias (*Paulownia* sp.).⁶⁴⁶ In addition to the English ivy retained at the Mason house site, the species was also planted in great quantities during the 1960s as part of the landscaping for the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, with almost 5,000 plants called for in the plans.⁶⁴⁷ An active program aimed at controlling the spread of English ivy is currently underway, as the vine poses a significant threat to young hardwood trees by choking them out and preventing them from growing beneath older trees. This effort is the only major management program in place on the island at the present time; otherwise the NPS has generally allowed the vegetation and other natural resources to develop naturally.

Plantings around the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial have, however, occasionally been replaced. A tree crew routinely ‘limbs up’ trees, particularly the willow oaks (*Quercus phellos*) circling the memorial, which were intentionally planted close together in order to give a dense effect for the monument’s dedication in 1967.⁶⁴⁸ The fifty-four willow oaks originally planted there remain in place or have been replaced in kind. The four boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*) planting beds are also still present, although the integrity of their arrangements has been compromised. These beds, while still generally conforming to the naturalistic planting arrangements, do not contain shrubs of historically accurate sizes. Where three different sizes of plants were originally called for to create a varied, staggered appearance in both height and massing, older boxwoods have become overgrown, reaching heights of 10’ or more, and their tops have been uniformly trimmed. In some places the shrubs have grown so large that they appear as one continuous hedge. Where shrubs have died, extremely small boxwoods have been planted as replacements. Approximately the size of the dwarf boxwood shrubs (*Buxus sempervirens* ‘Suffruticosa’) adjacent the monoliths, these new plantings are also historically inaccurate and particularly out of place given the extreme size of their surviving neighbors. Additionally, all English ivy (*Hedera helix*) has been removed from the memorial in accordance with the ongoing management program. The current conditions of the boxwood planting beds are therefore not representative of the original design for the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial.

In January 1999, architectural historian Kay Fanning prepared a nomination in support of Theodore Roosevelt Island’s listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Regarding the species composition of the landscape, she concluded that the vegetation

⁶⁴⁶ Olmsted, Jr., “Draft of Preliminary Report upon a Plan for the Permanent Development of Roosevelt Island.”

⁶⁴⁷ Fanning, 62.

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid.

*retained or added by [the] Olmsted firm should be considered significant, contributing features of the landscape. This does not mean each particular plant, but the general makeup of the vegetation on different parts of the island. Additionally, following Olmsted's directives, particularly large or fine specimens of native forest species, or promising smaller specimens, should be preserved.*⁶⁴⁹

Fanning also included a detailed list of the island's vegetation according to location, which is reproduced in its entirety below.⁶⁵⁰

GENERAL

Trees, Deciduous

Acer sp. (maple)
Betula nigra (river birch)
Carya sp. (hickory)
Celtis sp. (hackberry)
Cercis canadensis (redbud)
Cornus florida (flowering dogwood)
Diospyros virginiana (persimmon)
Fraxinus sp. (ash)
Liquidambar styraciflua (sweetgum)
Liriodendron tulipifera (tulip poplar)
Maclura pomifera (Osage orange)
Magnolia glauca (or *Magnolia virginiana*; sweetbay magnolia)
Morus sp. (mulberry)
Platanus sp. (plane)
Quercus sp. (oaks, both white and black)
Robinia sp. (locust)
Sassafras albidum (sassafras)
Ulmus sp. (elm)

Trees, Evergreen

Ilex opaca (American holly)
Juniperus virginiana (red cedar)
Magnolia grandiflora (evergreen or Southern magnolia)
Pinus sp. (pine)
Tsuga canadensis (Canada hemlock)
Tsuga sp. (hemlock)

Shrubs, Deciduous

Alnus incana (speckled alder)
Rhododendron nudiflorum (downy Pinxterbloom)

⁶⁴⁹ Fanning, v.

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid., vi-xi.

Lindera benzoin aestivale (spicebush)
Cornus amomum (silky or red willow dogwood)
Hydrangea arborescens (smooth hydrangea)
Symphoricarpos vulgaris (coralberry)
Viburnum opulus (European cranberry bush)
Viburnum sp.

Shrubs, Evergreen

Kalmia latifolia (mountain laurel)

Vines, Deciduous

Campsis radicans (trumpet vines)
Vitis sp. (grape)

Vines, Evergreen

Hedera helix (English ivy)

Groundcover

Vinca minor (periwinkle)

NORTH PLATEAU

(see also "THEODORE ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL" list, below)

Trees, Deciduous

Acer saccharinum (silver maple)
Asimina triloba (pawpaw)
Betula nigra (river birch)
Fraxinus sp. (ash)
Gleditsia (honey locust)
Liriodendron tulipifera (tulip poplar)
Platanus occidentalis (sycamore)
Ulmus sp. (elm)

Herbaceous Plants

Aquilegia sp. (columbine, native)
Cornel sp. (silky cornel)
Matteuccia (ostrich fern)
Mertensia sp. (mertensia)
Osmunda sp. (osmunda)
Polygonatum sp. (Solomon's seal)
Polypodiaceae sp. (fern, various species)
Saxifraga sp. (saxifrage, native)
Thalictrum sp. (thalictrums)
Uvularia (bellwort)

SOUTH PLATEAU

Trees, Deciduous

Acer saccharinum (silver maple)
Carpinus sp. (hornbeam)
Carya cordiformis (bitternut)
Catalpa sp. (catalpa)
Cornus sp. (dogwood)
Fagus sp. (beech)
Fraxinus sp. (ash)
Gleditsia (honey locust)
Gymnocladus dioica (Kentucky coffee tree)
Juglans nigra (black walnut)
Liriodendron tulipifera (tulip poplar)
Paulownia tomentosa (paulownia)
Prunus serotina (black cherry)
Quercus alba (white oak)
Quercus muehlenbergii (yellow chestnut oak)
Quercus rubra (red oak)

Trees, Evergreen

Tsuga sp. (hemlock)

Shrubs, Deciduous

Cornus sp. (silky cornel)
Lindera benzoin (spicebush)
Staphylea sp. (bladdernut)
Viburnum lentago (viburnum, black haw)
Viburnum prunifolium

Vines, Evergreen

Hedera helix (English ivy)

Groundcover

Vinca minor (periwinkle)

Herbaceous Plants

Actaea sp.
Claytonia sp. (spring beauty)
Dicentra cucullaria (Dutchman's breeches)
Erythronium sp.
Hydrophyllum sp. (waterleaf)
Matteuccia (ostrich fern)
Mertensia sp.
Podophyllum peltatum (mandrake; mayapple)

Polystichum acrostichoides (Christmas fern)

SOUTH PLATEAU, EAST-FACING SLOPE SOUTHEAST OF MASON HOUSE SITE

Trees, Evergreen

Cedrus sp. or *Juniperus virginiana* (cedar)

Tsuga sp. (hemlock)

Pinus echinata (short-leafed pine)

Pinus virginiana (Virginia pine)

Pinus strobus (white pine)

Herbaceous Plants

Erythronium sp.

Mertensia sp.

Podophyllum peltatum (mandrake; mayapple)

Polygonatum sp. (Solomon's-seal)

Polystichum acrostichoides (Christmas fern)

Thalictrum sp.

Trillium sp.

MARSH AND SWAMP

Trees, Deciduous

Acer negundo (box elder)

Acer saccharinum (silver maple)

Betula nigra (river birch)

Fraxinus americana (white ash)

Fraxinus sp. (ash)

Platanus occidentalis (sycamore)

Quercus prinus (basket oak)

Salix sp. (willow)

Taxodium distichum (bald cypress)

Ulmus sp. (elm)

Shrubs, Deciduous

Alnus sp. (alder)

Cephalanthus (buttonbush)

Cornus sp. (silky cornel)

Sambucus sp. (elder)

Herbaceous Plants

Hibiscus sp. (mallow)

Iris pseudacorus (water iris)

Peltandra sp.

Polypodiaceae (ferns)

Typha sp. (cattail)
Myosotis sp. (forget-me-not)
“pragamites” (probably “*phragmites*”)
“squaw weed” (possibly ragwort [*Senecio Jacobaea*] or other species)

LITTLE ISLAND

Trees, Deciduous

Acer sp. (maple)
Acer saccharinum (silver maple)
Betula nigra (river birch)
Carya cordiformis (bitternut)
Fraxinus sp. (ash)
Platanus occidentalis (sycamore)
Salix sp. (willow)
Ulmus sp. (elm)

Shrubs, Deciduous

Lindera benzoin (spicebush)
Sambucus sp. (elder)
Viburnum sp.

Herbaceous Plants

Claytonia sp. (spring beauty)
Lilium canadense
Matteuccia (ostrich fern)
Osmunda sp.
Phlox divaricata
Podophyllum peltatum (mandrake; mayapple)
Polygonatum sp. (Solomon’s seal)
Thalictrum sp.

NORTH PLATEAU: THEODORE ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL

Additional landscape planting was performed ca. 1965-67 in conjunction with construction of the monument on the north plateau.

Trees, Deciduous

Betula nigra (river birch)
Carpinus carolinia (American hornbeam)
Platanus occidentalis (sycamore)
Prunus serotina (black cherry)
Quercus alba (white oak)
Quercus phellos (willow oak)
Sassafras albidum “officinale” (sassafras)

Shrubs, Deciduous

Lindera benzoin (spicebush)

Sambucus canadensis (American elder)

Shrubs, Evergreen

Buxus sempervirens (Boxwood)

Buxus sempervirens ‘Suffruticosa’ (True dwarf boxwood)

Vines

Hedera helix (English ivy)

c. Water

Theodore Roosevelt Island’s location in the Potomac River has played an integral role in its history. In all likelihood, the main island was slowly formed from sediment layers deposited by the river during the centuries prior to the arrival of the first European explorers in the 1600s. Little Island began to emerge above the waterline in the mid-nineteenth century through the same process, intensified by the presence of the larger island. This sedimentation has also created the peninsular swamp on the east side of the main island. The slow accumulation of soil continues in the present day.

Historically, the position of Theodore Roosevelt Island in the Potomac River made for a natural crossing point, which directly led to the establishment of Mason’s Ferry in 1748. Ferry traffic remained a major means of reaching the island until construction of the present pedestrian bridge in 1979. Its location in the Potomac River has also kept the island relatively isolated, facilitating its many roles: plantation, private pleasure grounds, Army camp, freedmen’s camp, recreation area, and memorial. As an island, it was uniquely suited for reforestation, a concept that Olmsted and the RMA only began to consider after selecting the island as the memorial site. Finally, due in large part to the island’s relative inaccessibility, it is among the least visited of the Washington area’s major memorials. In many respects, however, this lack of crowds can be considered beneficial, as it further reinforces the island’s secluded character. Those who do travel to Theodore Roosevelt Island are better able to appreciate its interpretation as primeval forest and the wilderness that Roosevelt fought so hard to conserve.

2. Designed Features

a. Circulation

During the Mason era, circulation was concentrated on the north end of the island, with ferry traffic moving between the landing site to the east, and, from 1807, the causeway to the west, by a connecting road. The private allee leading to the Mason mansion also led south from this road. By the 1850s the allee had been displaced as the major north-south route by another road branching off from the causeway and running along the island’s west side (Figure 8). During the

Civil War-era the soldiers and freedmen encamped on the island utilized both this road and the northern ferry road.

During NPS ownership, there have been three primary versions of the circulation system for Theodore Roosevelt Island: the trails developed by Olmsted in the 1930s and 1940s, alterations carried out to this system in the 1950s and 1960s, and the greatly simplified arrangement that exists today. An early Olmsted Brothers plan, dated January 1936, shows a highly complex system of intersecting trails, bridle paths, and service roads. To the north, these corridors converge at a small rond point before leading to the rebuilt causeway. To the south, trails lead down from an oval path around the outlook terrace to the proposed ferry landing at the island's southern tip.⁶⁵¹ Essentially the same system appears in the final *General Plan* of 1945 except that the rond point is removed.⁶⁵² By the time NPS ferry service began in June 1953, the trails had been pulled back from the island's perimeter, especially at the north end (Figure 27).⁶⁵³ Construction of the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial necessitated further, relatively minor, alterations to the system of trails in the 1960s, and allowed access to the memorial from the north, south, and southeast (Figures 25 and 26). Today, this system is further simplified and composed of three major, aptly named trails: Woods, Upland, and Swamp (Figure 1). On the whole, the current circulation system, however, still generally conforms to the original Olmsted layout, retaining the basic routes of the outer perimeter trails, the path around the planned outlook terrace site, and the trail through the swamp. Furthermore, portions of the Mason-era ferry road remain as part of the trail system, with Fanning listing this relatively short, lateral section as the North Transverse Trail in her National Register nomination.⁶⁵⁴

As noted above, Olmsted sought to alter the island's grade as little as possible, and also intended the trails to be as inconspicuous as safety and ease of use would allow. He accomplished both of these objectives through long, sometimes winding routes, designed according to the island's topography. Regarding the physical construction of the trails, Olmsted stressed the importance of providing strong, well-drained foundations of stone and coarse gravel because of the soil's sticky character and its tendency to become "soft, muddy, and yielding, except in very dry weather."⁶⁵⁵ He described the foundation's composition in considerable detail:

There will be required in some places, especially on the low-lying, silty, eastern bottom-land, a base-course of hand-placed, one-man stones and chinkers, as an incident of the clearing up process . . . Elsewhere a base-course of cobbles and coarse gravel will suffice, and in all cases the layers immediately below the surfacing can be made of gravel. Test pits indicate that cobbles and gravel suitable for the above purposes, and sufficient in quantity, and possibly accompanied by excavation on the Island in the treeless area at the extreme south end of the ridge . . . the visible surfacing, however, for a depth of approximately four inches, is intended to be, in effect, a sandy loam, with just

⁶⁵¹ Fanning, 7.

⁶⁵² See sheet 2, box 5.

⁶⁵³ By this time the trail system was defined by three main routes, the "red, white, and blue" trails.

⁶⁵⁴ Fanning, 7.

⁶⁵⁵ Olmsted, Jr., "Theodore Roosevelt Island: Outline of Projected Improvement Work."

*sufficient binder to make it reasonably firm under foot without becoming damp, prepared on the general principle of sand-clay roads.*⁶⁵⁶

Theodore Roosevelt Island is currently accessible during daylight hours from the Virginia shore via the pedestrian bridge, built 1979. The parking lot, servicing the pedestrian bridge on the Virginia side, was originally unpaved when first constructed in the 1960s. From 1993-94 it was rebuilt as part of road improvements for the George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP). The island's three main trails, although simplified from Olmsted's initial design, are considered original, and apart from the swamp trail remain in mostly good condition. Park maintenance staff formerly brought in dirt and sand to maintain the trails, but due to decreases in funds and staffing throughout the GWMP, now only responds to problems, such as adding material to muddy trails. In some areas, trails have widened because of people walking around patches of mud.⁶⁵⁷ Not surprisingly, the swamp trail proved particularly prone to waterlogging, and the 1996-98 construction of the raised boardwalk, built over the original trail, was undertaken as a means of assuring visitor safety and trail durability. The boardwalk, made of recycled plastic, corresponds to the route of the previous trail, except for the additions of the small overlook extending into the marsh and the wider areas where benches are situated, both of which mirror the widening of the original trail made by visitors walking around mud. Visitors have also created several foot-worn "social trails" throughout the island, which are not part of the historic landscape design and detract from its integrity.⁶⁵⁸

b. Views and Vistas

Due to its location in the Potomac River, Theodore Roosevelt Island has always held the potential for excellent views westward toward downtown Washington, D.C. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. sought to take advantage of this favorable placement on the landscape, and from at least 1934 included the creation of an "outlook terrace" or "outlook plateau" in his general plans for the island. This paved platform was to have been integrated into the natural hillside and afforded views of the Lincoln Memorial, the western end of the Mall, Arlington Memorial Bridge, Arlington House, and the Potomac River.⁶⁵⁹ In his first preliminary report to the RMA, Olmsted wrote:

At the southern end of the island beginning just south of the [Mason House] ruins which mark the highest ground, the superb views obtainable from the ridge of the island across the river toward the Lincoln Memorial, and the views downstream toward the [Arlington] Memorial Bridge and beyond, are the controlling landscape considerations. Therefore this area, which except along the western edge happens to have been almost denuded of good trees by fire, should be treated mainly in open turf and other low growth, with only

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid., 2-3.

⁶⁵⁷ Fanning, 62.

⁶⁵⁸ Fanning fixes the locations of the island's social trails as "one along northern half western shore, one along southern half western shore, one looping trail along north shore, one trail from north transverse trail to monument." See Fanning, iv.

⁶⁵⁹ Fanning, 18.

*such few trees as would definitely enhance effect of these views; frankly contrasting with the forest-cover of the rest of the island.*⁶⁶⁰

Olmsted and the RMA also considered the outlook terrace the most appropriate location for a physical memorial to Theodore Roosevelt. Protracted debate regarding the construction of such a memorial, coupled with funding shortfalls, effectively stalled the development of the outlook terrace throughout the 1930s and 1940s, and the decision to build the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Bridge across the island's southern end in the late 1950s completely eliminated any possibility of realizing Olmsted's design intent. No subsequent efforts to create such a vantage point have been undertaken. Currently the Lincoln Memorial can only be glimpsed from the south end of the marsh, and even here the bridge poses a formidable obstacle.

Olmsted also addressed the need to limit additional views off of the island, specifically toward

*the industrial districts of Georgetown and Rosslyn, when at all panoramic and unobstructed, are and will remain unpleasantly inharmonious with the sylvan character of the island; yet glimpses of the water, even from under and between foliage, against partially obscured industrial backgrounds can be very pleasant, and there are a few narrow vistas obtainable from this [northern] part of the island, especially up the Potomac past the Key bridge, which are very beautiful when happily framed by foreground objects which mask objectionable surroundings. Positions close to the shores of this part of the island are liable, therefore, to be either very agreeable or quite the reverse, depending upon rather slight but critical differences in foliage conditions and other foreground details.*⁶⁶¹

Such "narrow vistas" are still present today, but although industrial activities have since disappeared from the surrounding shores, some "objectionable surroundings" remain. Portions of the Rosslyn shoreline, in particular, are laden with graffiti easily visible from the island, giving the area a vandalized and unsightly appearance. However, more pleasing views of the George Washington Memorial Parkway and Rosslyn high-rises are also visible. Most views east toward Washington are currently obstructed by vegetative growth.

Several vantage points offer excellent views of the island itself. The observation deck of the Washington Monument looks out over Theodore Roosevelt Island, and the island's pedestrian bridge offers picturesque views up and down the Potomac River, with the island in the foreground. Specifically, the Washington National Cathedral rises in the distance to the northeast. Additionally, both the Virginia and Washington coastlines afford views of the island, as does the GWMP.

Finally, as visitors arrive on the island, vegetation screens the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial from sight, while the short entrance trail initially leads them southwest before turning north to

⁶⁶⁰ Olmsted, Jr.. "Draft of Preliminary Report."

⁶⁶¹ Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., "Theodore Roosevelt Island: Report on Adjustment in Location of Northwestern and Northern Portion of Main Circuit Foot Path on Visit of May 22nd to 26th, 1936," 11 June 1936, Olmsted Papers and Records, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, D.C.

line up on axis with the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial. This arrangement presents a striking vista, centered on the *Theodore Roosevelt* statue, and framed on either side by the tall trees growing along the trail's edge. The effect is further strengthened by the memorial's slightly higher elevation relative to its approach.

c. Buildings and Structures

The most significant structure located on Theodore Roosevelt Island is the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, located on the northwest section of the island, and designed by architect Eric Gugler and sculptor John Manship. Although ill-informed critics objected to the memorial, constructed 1961-67, on the erroneous charge that it would necessitate removing a large swath of trees, the site chosen was actually a pre-existing clearing previously used for jousting matches and athletic competitions.⁶⁶² The Olmsted plan recommended developing this area as a picnic grove, removing many of the trees, planting the clearing with grass, and constructing a shelter to the north, and at least some of this landscape work had apparently been carried out before the decision was made to construct the memorial here in the early 1960s.⁶⁶³

The Theodore Roosevelt Memorial is the second such structure designed by Gugler and Manship, whose much-maligned first attempt featured a large armillary sphere within a raised square plaza. The pair essentially modified this original design in creating the plan for the current memorial. As constructed, it comprises a large, elliptical plaza, measuring approximately 240' x 260', encircled by a water-filled moat spanned by two footbridges. The plaza is composed of gray granite paving blocks set within a grid formed by lengths of lighter gray granite. The principal axis is arranged approximately north to south; the secondary axis runs east to west perpendicular to the principal axis. Two large, round granite pools are located along this cross axis at the east and west ends of the plaza. At the center of each pool stands a large, elliptical granite fountain basin supported by four structural steel columns, each of which is surrounded by a painted metal sphere designed to simulate stone. Each sphere also bears a bas-relief of the presidential seal. Three low, curved steps descend around the fountains to the surrounding gravel walk.

Paul Manship's bronze *Theodore Roosevelt* statue measures 19'-10" tall (21'-6" with bronze base) and functions as the focal point of the memorial, arranged along the principal north-south axis at the north end of the plaza. Raised upon a molded granite plinth in front of a an approximately 30' x 17' granite stele, the president is dressed in contemporary attire and "depicted in a characteristic speaking pose, his weight slightly forward, his right hand raised for emphasis."⁶⁶⁴

Separated from the plaza by the gravel walk, the 39'-11" wide moat is bisected by the principal axis, providing entrances to the memorial from the north and south. The moats, surrounded by low granite walls, were meant to act as reflecting pools, and were probably intended to be read as

⁶⁶² "A Tournament on the Potomac;" Netherton, "Delicate Beauty," 47-53.

⁶⁶³ Fanning, 14.

⁶⁶⁴ James M. Goode, *The Outdoor Sculpture of Washington, D.C.: A Comprehensive Historical Guide* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1974), 188.

a single water feature.⁶⁶⁵ The two footbridges are heavy-styled and strikingly simple, reached on either end by steeply angled steps, paved with granite blocks arranged in various fan patterns. Each also bears a pair of heavy granite guard walls, which rise slightly as the bridge crowns, before descending and terminating in plinths. The bridges lead to an unpaved circumferential trail comprising the memorial's outside edge.⁶⁶⁶ Four granite monoliths are located to the north, along the moat's interior edge, and are inscribed with quotations from Roosevelt's speeches and writings on "Nature," "Manhood," "Youth," and "The State." Each measures approximately 21'-5" x 10' and is set on a molded base, which in turn rests on a plain, rectilinear block. The monoliths themselves are simple slabs with square edges and no moldings.⁶⁶⁷

Taken as a whole, the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial is in fair condition. The bronze statue appears physically sound, but shows considerable oxidation. Inscriptions on the monoliths have begun to fade slightly, although all characters remain clearly legible. The moat contains numerous cracks, which have led to leaks in the past. The current concrete patch jobs, while largely successful at holding back the water, are nonetheless visually obtrusive and unappealing. As the moat is not aerated, the water does not circulate, allowing for the growth of algal blooms and bacterial colonies. Moreover, in several places the fountains' paint has eroded, as water continuously runs over the sides of the basins and across the underlying supports. Consequently, the presidential bas-reliefs are largely obscured. Many of the plaza's small granite paving blocks are also chipped, cracked, or uneven, with the interstitial spaces between them widening. Lastly, the growth of the willow oaks over the past forty years has dramatically increased the number of leaves falling within the plaza. While this leaf litter is itself a minor nuisance, the accumulation of detritus in the moat is a more serious problem. Beyond the need to regularly remove this accretion, the decomposing leaves further exacerbate the unsavory conditions caused by the presence of standing water.

The comfort station designed by architect Charles R. Wait, constructed at the southern end of the upland plateau in 1955, is the only building constructed on the island in accordance with the Olmsted Brothers landscape plan. This small, one story, wood frame building contains men's and women's restrooms and is covered with clapboards beneath a hipped roof clad in asphalt shingles. Ventilation louvers are housed within small gabled outcroppings along the ends of the roof plane. The building was originally intended to include a central venting cupola, but this feature was omitted in Wait's design and never constructed.⁶⁶⁸ The simple, utilitarian building reflects Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.'s goal of keeping all human-made aspects of the landscape inconspicuous and subordinate to the island's overall development as a native climax forest. At present the comfort station is structurally sound, with functioning restroom facilities.

Several modern buildings and structures are also located on the island. Construction on the six-lane, 2,400' long Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Bridge began in 1960 and was completed in 1964. The bridge is capable of carrying hundreds of thousands of cars daily across the Potomac River from west end of Constitution Avenue in Washington to the Virginia shore near Rosslyn. It

⁶⁶⁵ Ibid., 15.

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid., 17.

crosses directly over the narrow channel separating Little Island from the main body of Theodore Roosevelt Island, before passing over the southern end of this larger island. Here massive stone piers support the bridge's steel girders and characteristic shallow arches. The southern end of the island, originally envisioned by Olmsted as the site of the Outlook Terrace, ferry dock, shelter, and comfort station, today possesses little landscape integrity and is prone to trash accumulation. The Theodore Roosevelt Island Pedestrian Bridge (HAER VA-87) spans the Little River channel, connecting the Virginia shoreline with the island to the southwest of the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial. Built in 1979, it replaced an earlier causeway at the same location and is accessible from a parking lot off the northbound lanes of the George Washington Memorial Parkway in Virginia. The bridge is a blend of architectural styles; the stone-faced wing walls recall the heavy masonry of early stone-faced bridges while the twelve prestressed concrete support girders lend the structure a lighter, airy quality. Paired girders rest on a total of six reinforced concrete single piers, each 3' in diameter. The total length of the bridge is 491' with a maximum span of 72'. The concrete deck is 12'-4" wide and capable of carrying NPS service vehicles. Although timber handrails were specified in its design, the bridge was constructed with metal rails.⁶⁶⁹ The Theodore Roosevelt Island Pedestrian Bridge is well maintained and is currently the only means of accessing the island provided by the National Park Service.

Two simple utilitarian buildings are also located nearby the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial. A wooden A-frame ranger station had been constructed to the northwest by the 1970s, but was later destroyed in a fire and replaced by a second building of the same design sometime after 1986. A similar wooden utility shed is located just northeast of the memorial and probably dates to the 1980s.⁶⁷⁰ Both remain in use today, although there is no full-time NPS staff stationed on the island.

d. Small Scale Elements

Benches constitute the only historically significant small scale elements present on Theodore Roosevelt Island. Sixteen granite benches are placed symmetrically at the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, eight along the plaza's principle axis, four along the cross axis, and two on each of the bridges. Each bench is made up of a horizontal granite slab with rounded edges, supported by a pair of granite consoles carved in a classical scroll pattern. Although these benches are all original, their architectural detail is somewhat at odds with the simple form and heavy character of the memorial. These benches are largely well-maintained, although one has had a corner cracked off of its seat.⁶⁷¹ Additionally, at least six rustic NPS "Washington" benches, composed of square cedar timbers, are present, particularly on the south plateau. Cast iron wood benches of the type developed for the National Mall are located on the raised boardwalk. While the former design correlates with the island's overall wilderness theme, the latter is Victorian inspired and seemingly a poor fit for the naturalized woodland of Theodore Roosevelt Island.⁶⁷²

⁶⁶⁹ Elizabeth M. Nolin, Michael P. Kucher, and Jennifer P. Wentzien, "History," in "Theodore Roosevelt Island Pedestrian Bridge" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) No. Va. 8, 1988-94).

⁶⁷⁰ Fanning, 62.

⁶⁷¹ This bench is located immediately south of the plaza's cross axis, along the west side of the principal axis.

⁶⁷² Ibid., 9, 15, 24.

Additional small scale elements are also spread out over the island. Eighteen waysides interpret themes from the island's cultural and natural history, and a wooden information board placed near the terminus of the pedestrian bridge greets visitors with basic information regarding the island and complimentary brochures outlining its significance, development, and management. A rustic log fence is located adjacent to the information board, and a high-water marker stands along the far northeastern shoreline next to a warning sign. Two additional signs and ten numbered signposts are also placed throughout the island. Three water fountains are provided for visitor use on a seasonal basis. These elements remain in reasonably good repair. The orientation station and flagpole located on the island's north end during the 1950s and 1960s are no longer present, as is the NPS ferry landing along the island's north shore. It was probably removed when the pedestrian bridge was built in 1979. An electrical box, electrical post, pump station, and ventilation pipe are located northeast of the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial in the vicinity of the utility shed.

e. Archaeological Sites

Current information regarding archeological resources present on Theodore Roosevelt Island is extremely limited. Two prehistoric sites, 51NW3 and 51NW12, are recorded on District of Columbia archeological site forms, but neither are well documented.⁶⁷³ The latter is located in the middle-north section of the island, and described by archeologist Samuel V. Proudfit in 1923 as a "village" despite scant evidence to substantiate this assertion.⁶⁷⁴ However, several researchers have sought to identify the probable locations of Native American settlements described by early European explorers to the Chesapeake Bay and Potomac River, particularly those given by John Smith during his exploration of the region in 1608. During this journey, Smith recorded the presence of the Namoraughquend Indian village within the boundaries of present-day Arlington County, Virginia, on or near land administered by the George Washington Memorial Parkway.⁶⁷⁵ In 1983-84, Stephen R. Potter, now NPS Regional Archaeologist for the National Capital Region, fixed the location of Namoraughquend as in the vicinity of Theodore Roosevelt Island.⁶⁷⁶ Historian Nan Netherton goes further, contending that the Necostin (Anacostin) tribe established the village on the island itself.⁶⁷⁷ If true, this claim would substantiate Prodfit's vague mention of a village site on Theodore Roosevelt Island. The exact location of Namoraughquend, however, has yet to be definitively determined, and archeological excavation of site 51NW12 will be required to equate it with the village.

On 3 April 1967, Zorro A. Bradley, Acting Chief Archeologist for Prince William Forest Park and the GWMP, submitted a proposal for Harvard Ayers to supervise an archaeological excavation of site 51NW3. Ayers, then an archeology graduate student at the Catholic University

⁶⁷³ For the approximate locations of the sites, see sheet 2, box 1.

⁶⁷⁴ Paul B. Cissna, "Historical and Archeological Study of the George Washington Memorial Parkway, Arlington County, Virginia" (Occasional Report #4, Regional Archeology Program, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, National Capital Region, Washington, D.C., 1990): 8.

⁶⁷⁵ Cissna, 27.

⁶⁷⁶ Ibid., quoting Stephen R. Potter, "The Indians of Seventeenth Century Fairfax," *Fairfax Chronicles: A History, Archaeology, and Preservation Newsletter* 7, no. 4 (1983-1984): 1, 3-4.

⁶⁷⁷ Nan Netherton et al., *Fairfax County, Virginia: A History* (Fairfax, Va.: Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, 1978), 3.

of America, was to be compensated \$300 for his services, and directed to utilize the labor resources of the Northern Virginia Chapter of the Archaeological Society of Virginia.⁶⁷⁸ Ayers undertook this “labor of love,” as Chief of Interpretation W. H. Hendrickson called it,⁶⁷⁹ between 20 May and 16 July 1967.⁶⁸⁰ Although Hendrickson considered Ayers “competent,” and NPS Staff Archeologist B. Bruce Powell described him as “an extremely conscientious young man” with a “desire to do the best possible job on this project,” Ayers’ work proved largely inadequate.⁶⁸¹ His short report includes a general map of the site in relation to Theodore Roosevelt Island and also the larger context of the Potomac River Valley, as well as a second map intended to give the locations of his six excavation squares (Figures 28 and 29).⁶⁸² Ayers described the site as “situated on the northeast corner of the island,” and extending “for a distance of about 250 feet along the upper portion of the boundary between the resistant shist [sic] and the alluvial deposits. The site extends [back?] from that boundary for a distance of about 50 feet. This [area?] ranges in elevation from approximately 12 to 18 feet above sea level.”⁶⁸³ This description, even with the accompanying maps, has proven insufficient for present-day archaeologists to redefine Ayer’s site boundaries and excavation units, as he neither included a reference to a fixed landmark, nor left behind markers to record these positions. Given the vague descriptions for both 51NW3 and 51NW12, it is actually impossible to determine if the two sites overlap, or where one ends and the other begins. “Indeed it is quite probable that these two sites are really one and that there is a continuous series of prehistoric sheet middens or occupations that overlap one another, making it difficult to determine discreet boundaries.”⁶⁸⁴ Even more alarming, Ayers concluded, “in my opinion, the excavation just completed . . . is sufficient to gain the limited amount of information there and I would recommend no further work.”⁶⁸⁵ This is an extremely shortsighted, and most likely unwarranted, conclusion given that his knowledge of the site, relatively large at approximately 12,500 square feet, had been formed solely from the findings of six individual excavation squares.

In June 1974, Ayers and Charles W. McNett, an archeologist at American University, published an eight-page report based on the 1967 excavation. This document appeared in an issue of the non-juried amateur journal of the Archaeological Society of Virginia, and does little to assuage the concerns stemming from Ayers’ original report.⁶⁸⁶ In this second report, however, the pair contend that while the island was occupied from about 1500 B.C. to the present, the major

⁶⁷⁸ Zorro A. Bradley to Superintendent, Prince William Forest Park and George Washington Memorial Parkway, 3 April 1967.

⁶⁷⁹ W. H. Hendrickson to Superintendent, Prince William Forest Park and George Washington Memorial Parkway, 10 April 1967.

⁶⁸⁰ Fanning, 116.

⁶⁸¹ Hendrickson to Superintendent; B. Bruce Powell to Superintendent, George Washington Memorial Parkway, 16 August 1967.

⁶⁸² Also see sheet 2, box 1 for the approximate location of Ayers’ excavation.

⁶⁸³ Ayers, 1.

⁶⁸⁴ Fanning, 116.

⁶⁸⁵ Ayers, 4.

⁶⁸⁶ Fanning, 116.

occupation was at the end of the Early Woodland and beginning of the Middle Woodland, an era dating from about 750 B.C. until 200 A.D.⁶⁸⁷

Archeological research on the Mason mansion, D.C. site 51NW19, is, if anything, even less complete than that of the island's two prehistoric sites. As Olmsted and the RMA gave NPS staff little time to react to the pending demolition of the surviving above-ground ruins, a hasty twelve-week excavation was undertaken immediately prior to this work during the summer of 1936. Stuart Barnette, an architect with no archeological training, supervised the excavation as part of the overall HABS documentation project for the site. Equally untrained CCC workers provided the physical labor. Following the excavation, Barnette authored a preliminary report in which he cautioned that the document was

*intended only to describe the procedure and extent of work of excavation of the ruins of the Mason House and its dependencies on Analostan Island. A complete report is being prepared which will present in detail by means of drawings, photographs, and descriptions the present condition of the ruins, the architectural evidence contained therein, the attempted interpretation of the same, and finally drawings showing the whole estate restored to its original appearance.*⁶⁸⁸

This final report (HABS DC-28) states that in addition to the Mason mansion, four smaller dependencies were also documented, three to the east of the main house, and one immediately to the west. According to Barnette, "so few pertinent artifacts were excavated in these units it is difficult to arrive at a logical use to which each building was devoted."⁶⁸⁹ Nevertheless, he posited likely uses for each of the buildings, which rest heavily on the physical evidence obtained from the buildings themselves.⁶⁹⁰ Barnette utilized the archeological excavation in providing an extensive architectural description of the ruins, including a rendering of an intact Mason mansion, completed with a west wing that was never actually realized. Both his initial and final reports, however, provide almost no insight into the archeology involved. While Barnette noted a dearth of artifacts, he also stated that when they were discovered, each was catalogued and its location recorded in a field notebook.⁶⁹¹ Barnette never included a discussion of the artifacts in his reports, and as this notebook has since been lost, there is currently no list of artifacts excavated from the site, to say nothing of provenience. Moreover, after the project Barnette reburied the artifacts in a concrete vault somewhere on site. When later asked for its location, Barnette confessed that he did not remember.⁶⁹² No documentation has since surfaced

⁶⁸⁷ Cissna, 8. The pair reach this timetable based on a thorough analysis of the artifacts uncovered during excavation, mainly ceramic fragments. For a detailed explanation of the methods employed see their 1974 report or Cissna's summary on pages 9 and 10 of his "Historical and Archeological Study."

⁶⁸⁸ Stuart M. Barnette, forward to "Preliminary Report on Exploratory Excavations at the Mason House."

⁶⁸⁹ Barnette, "Descriptive Data on the Mason House," 9.

⁶⁹⁰ In addition to the Mason house itself, Barnette identified a quarters or office, ice house, general storage building, and a fuel storage building, in addition to a well and the remnants of several retaining walls. For a more detailed discussion of these buildings and structures, including which architectural elements led Barnette to his conclusion, see Barnette, "Descriptive Data on the Mason House."

⁶⁹¹ Barnette, 4.

⁶⁹² B. Bruce Powell to Mary Curry, Washington, D.C., 23 June 1972, George Washington Memorial Parkway Headquarters, Turkey Run, Va.

to provide an answer, and efforts to physically locate the vault have proven unsuccessful. Writing in 1972, NPS archeologist B. Bruce Powell, who had earlier consulted with Ayers on site 51NW3, reported:

*With the cooperation of the Army Engineers at Fort Belvoir, the house site was gone over with metal detection equipment. Whenever the detectors indicated buried metal, we dug a test pit. All we found were nails and tin cans. We also put an east-west test trench through the three central rooms of the main portion of the house on the off chance we might run into the vault somewhere inside the foundations. Again, we had no luck.*⁶⁹³

Utilizing modern ground penetrating radar, another search may succeed in locating the vault, but at present the only evidence whatsoever relating to these artifacts comes from two HABS photographs taken by photographer John O. Brostrup on 27 August 1936.⁶⁹⁴

Powell also conducted a second excavation in the fall of 1962. If he uncovered any new information, it has since been lost. Expressing his regret to researcher Mary Curry, Powell explained:

*I am very sorry to tell you that I have been unable to find a trace of the report. Search of the files of the Division of Anthropology and Archeology of the National Park Service; the files of the National Capital Parks; and the files of George Washington Memorial Parkway, which administers Roosevelt Island, has been fruitless. There is no record of the report having been sent to any Federal records storage center, so I must assume it has been lost or thrown away... We collected 103 artifacts during these tests, but I do not know where they are now.*⁶⁹⁵

Eight years later, in the spring of 1970 the NPS permitted a class of graduate students in the American Studies Program of the Smithsonian Institution to conduct an archeological dig on the Virginia side of the island and down a hillside from the Mason mansion and outbuildings.⁶⁹⁶ A Federal Antiquities Act permit issued to the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of History and Technology on 25 November 1969 authorized this excavation, but no report was ever produced. Furthermore, the students possessed little to no archeological training, and were supervised by two similarly inexperienced individuals, historian Wilcomb E. Washburn and Harold K. Skramstad, Jr., a management professional at the Smithsonian. Historian Mary E. Curry offers the following account of their excavation.

A ten foot square area was carefully excavated with trowels. The artifacts were placed in bags giving the level where they were found and were later washed and labeled by Mrs. Gail Kassin, a class member who also put many pottery fragments together. The artifacts are the property of the National Park Service but are being studied by Robert H. McNulty, one of the archeological consultants for the class.

⁶⁹³ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁴ For photographs, see HABS DC-28, photographs 68 and 69.

⁶⁹⁵ Powell to Curry.

⁶⁹⁶ Curry, 31.

A great variety of objects was discovered. Fragments of an earthenware plate made in Alexandria by Henry Piercy between 1790 and 1800 were found.⁶⁹⁷ A Mediterranean import of earthenware with a yellowish-green glaze,⁶⁹⁸ a two pronged fork and one half of its bone handle, and many fragments of pearlware, creamware, porcelain, nails, glass, and stoneware were uncovered. One stoneware fragment had what may be an "M" on it. The artifacts date from the late Eighteenth Century to the middle Nineteenth Century.⁶⁹⁹

Since the objects were found with many pieces of pig and cow bones⁷⁰⁰ and with kitchenware fragments, it is possible that the hillside examined was a dumping ground for one of the smaller buildings and thus the 1970 site contained an original trash pit from Mason's time.⁷⁰¹

Although the authorizing permit stipulates that all artifacts remain the property of the National Park Service, it also specifically designates the Smithsonian Institution as being directly responsible for providing curatorial services for materials recovered under this permit.⁷⁰² They remain in the collection of the Smithsonian Institution today, but in November 1970 the Smithsonian loaned Gunston Hall a total of sixty-five artifacts for use in a temporary exhibit running until April 1971.⁷⁰³ Mary Clair Peden, Gunston Hall Manager, officially submitted this request in writing on 27 October 1970, asking, to borrow the artifacts from the John Mason site on Roosevelt Island.⁷⁰⁴ Her choice of words implies that she was seeking the entire artifact collection, and not specific items. Regardless, a list of the borrowed artifacts was included in a 6 November 1970 letter from the Smithsonian to the NPS, which constitutes the most extensive documentation on the 1970 excavation. This list is reproduced below.⁷⁰⁵

⁶⁹⁷ Curry states that these artifacts were identified by Richard Muzzrole of the Alexandria Archeological Project. Henry Piercy was a well known potter who operated out of his Alexandria studio at 222 South Washington Street from 1792 to 1809, after relocating from Philadelphia during the Revolutionary War. For more information on Percy and his pottery, see Barbara H. Magid and Bernard K. Means, "In the Philadelphia Style: The Potter of Henry Percy," in *Ceramics in America*, ed. Robert Hunter (Hanover: Chipstone Foundation and the University Press of New England, 2003), 47-66.

⁶⁹⁸ According to Curry, the earthenware was identified by Ivor Noël Hume, one of the leading historical archeologists of the twentieth century.

⁶⁹⁹ If the identification is accurate, the presence of the Piercy earthenware definitively dates construction of the Mason House to the last decade of the nineteenth century. Likewise, the expensive ceramics, particularly the fragment bearing the letter M – possibly the initial for "Mason," uncovered by the excavation provide a telling glimpse of the Masons' opulent lifestyle. Given the obvious historical and archeological importance of these findings, the fact that no report was ever completed to adequately document the excavation is therefore all the more troubling and disappointing.

⁷⁰⁰ Curry states that the animal bones were identified by John Paradiso, Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution.

⁷⁰¹ Curry, 31-32.

⁷⁰² Rex L. Wilson, to Virginia Beets, Washington, D.C., 18 June 1976, George Washington Memorial Parkway Headquarters, Turkey Run, Va.

⁷⁰³ Robert H. McNulty to Mary Claire Peden, Washington, D.C., 2 November 1970, George Washington Memorial Parkway Headquarters, Turkey Run, Va.

⁷⁰⁴ Mary Claire Peden to Robert McNulty, Lorton, Virginia, 27 October 1970, George Washington Memorial Parkway Headquarters, Turkey Run, Va.

⁷⁰⁵ Robert H. McNulty to Jack Rudy, Washington, D.C., 6 November 1970, George Washington Memorial Parkway Headquarters, Turkey Run, Va.

Fragments loaned to Gunston Hall

<i>8 metal – 1 handle</i>	<i>3 earthenware</i>
<i>8 glass – (colored glass)</i>	<i>1 pearlware</i>
<i>13 glass (crystal)</i>	<i>4 transfer earthenware</i>
<i>6 stoneware</i>	<i>8 China</i>
<i>2 Mediterranean jugs</i>	<i>2 wedgewood</i>
<i>2 Piercy slipware</i>	<i>5 edgeware (rims)</i>
<i>1 millston</i>	<i>1 redware</i>
<i>1 creamware</i>	

In addition to the two prehistoric sites and the former site of the Mason mansion and dependencies, Theodore Roosevelt Island also contains several potential archeological resources that have not been excavated or explored. A June 1932 survey of the island prepared by the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital shows several such resources concentrated on the far north end (Figure 30). A short distance south from its connection with the north transverse trail, the Swamp Trail passes a large depression in the ground. This location corresponds with the area marked “ruins” on the June 1932 survey, and is most likely the foundation remains of the Mason-era ferry house.

Southwest of the ruins, and at a higher elevation, the June 1932 survey depicts an extant “dwelling,” with three smaller buildings immediately to the south. While clearing the island in March 1935, CCC workers “revealed a hermit who had been quietly living there for six years.”⁷⁰⁶ As the survey was created less than six years previous, the term dwelling was most likely employed to describe the squatter’s abode. In his preliminary report on the mansion excavation, Barnette referred to “another group of buildings in the central part of island [that] are still standing, and are inhabited, but deserve no further consideration for they are of early 20th Century or late 19th Century origin.”⁷⁰⁷ Given that the June 1932 survey does not include any buildings, either extant or in ruins, other than those present on the mansion site and to the island’s far north end, Barnette seems to be describing the dwelling and the three buildings near it. His location of the buildings “in the central part of island,” is perplexing, but Barnette seems to have intended it as part of a larger description of the possible archeological resources present on island’s north end. As the four buildings were located in the central portion of the north end, and Barnette also mentions at least one occupant, most likely a squatter or “hermit,” he appears to be describing the dwelling and three nearby buildings shown on the June 1932 survey. In the 29 May 1935 planting notes, Olmsted Brothers also referred to an “existing dwelling house,” and “outlying structures,” and noted that an investigation should be conducted to determine the feasibility of rehabilitating the buildings for use in his development plan.⁷⁰⁸ This description indicates that the firm was considering including these structures in their unrealized development of the island’s north end.

⁷⁰⁶ Curry, 28.

⁷⁰⁷ Barnette, “Preliminary Report on Exploratory Excavations at the Mason House,” 3.

⁷⁰⁸ Olmsted Brothers, “Roosevelt Memorial Island, Washington, D.C.: Notes to Accompany Plan No.”

The dwelling's history, and that of the three smaller buildings, is not straightforward, but two scenarios appear likely. First, assuming Barnette is correct in estimating their dates of construction, the buildings were probably erected by one of the island's various owners or tenants during the late nineteenth century, as no improvements appear to have been carried out between the 1890s and 1930s. If so, the Columbia Athletic Club is the most likely candidate, as the group built a clubhouse, racetrack, baseball field, tennis courts, and a grandstand on the island. The second possibility is that the buildings were erected earlier in the nineteenth century, possibly the last remnants of the island's Civil War commissary depot (Figure 9). Although this idea is in contention with Barnette's construction dates, his reports contain numerous errors and inaccuracies, and therefore should not be taken as absolute fact. Regardless of the particular construction history, however, the island's northeast corner should prove a rich archeological area, containing the former sites of one eighteenth or early nineteenth century building (the ferry house), four more buildings likely dating from the mid-to-late nineteenth century (the dwelling and three buildings to its south).

Barnette also briefly mentioned a "local rumor" suggesting that the dwelling was built on the site of a graveyard.⁷⁰⁹ He neither cited his source nor offered additional information, but recognized that further archeological investigations would be necessary to substantiate or refute the story. The site is, however, a reasonable location for a graveyard, located in a relatively remote area of the island; far enough inland and of sufficient elevation to prevent being washed away by tide action. If a graveyard is indeed located here, it most likely dates to the Civil War era. Union soldiers and, particularly, residents of the Mason's Island freedmen's camp, would have died and required burial. As both camps were intentionally sequestered on the island, burials may well have taken place there as well, although Mason's causeway was still extant at this time and provided relatively easy access to Arlington National Cemetery.

Theodore Roosevelt Island also holds additional archeological resources, including the remains of four historic wooden wharves, probably dating from the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, located along the north coast. The wooden skeleton of a wrecked boat or scow, likely from the same time period is also offshore (Figure 1). Remnants of the historic Mason's Causeway itself almost certainly remain off the northwest shore, covered with a thick, broken slab of concrete left over from the NPS service causeway constructed in the 1950s and demolished ca. 1979.⁷¹⁰ Additional portions of Mason's Causeway are likely still present below the waterline of the Little River, also covered with debris from the NPS causeway. The June 1932 survey also placed the wreckage of six additional boats or scows off the island's east coast (Figure 1). Moreover, according to Fanning, "near the end of the pedestrian bridge is a site formerly occupied by a stone wharf, present on maps from the 1930s and dating from at least the nineteenth century" (Figure 1).⁷¹¹ Simple stone retaining walls are also located in certain points along the shoreline to the south and may be associated with either the Mason or Olmsted landscape plans, or both (Figure 1).⁷¹² Finally, a structure was located near the island's southwest shore, apparently constructed by William A. Bradley in the late 1850s (Figure 8). Bradley also built two wharves

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁷¹⁰ Fanning, 12.

⁷¹¹ Ibid., 16.

⁷¹² Ibid., 17.

on the island, one along the north coast, likely one of the decaying wooden wharves still present today, and one along the east coast. The latter was probably utilized in the following decade as the water entrance to the freedman's camp (Figure 12) and possibly afterward by private visitors and the Columbia Athletic Club.

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3. Sources Not Yet Investigated

The Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, located in Brookline, Massachusetts, serves as the official NPS repository for architectural drawings created by Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and the Olmsted Brothers landscape architecture firm. The center's collection is known to include a large number of plans for Theodore Roosevelt Island, possibly including that meant to accompany the 29 May 1935 planting notes.

The New York Public Library, Humanities and Social Sciences Library, Manuscripts and Archives Division, maintains the records of the U.S. Sanitary Commission, including the Washington Hospital Directory Archives for the years 1862-66 (MssCol 3101, RG 12). This collection is known to contain information on the Union soldiers, U.S. Colored Troops, hospital staff, and relevant civilians. The collection may therefore contain information relating to the Civil War-era occupation and use of Theodore Roosevelt Island.

B. Supplemental Illustrations

Figure 1: Theodore Roosevelt Island, Area Map and Locations of Landscape Elements

Source: Derived from Kay Fanning, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Theodore Roosevelt Island," (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, 1999), fig. 12.

1. North plateau
2. South plateau
3. Marsh/swamp
4. Little Island
5. Mason mansion ruins
6. Mason icehouse ruins
7. Raised earthen mound on which Mason mansion stood
8. Theodore Roosevelt Memorial
9. Woods Trail
10. Upland Trail
11. Swamp Trail
12. North transverse trail/historic road trace between Mason's Ferry and Mason's Causeway
13. Remnants of Mason's Causeway
- 14-15. Two stone retaining walls
- 16-19. Approximate locations of ca. four ferry wharves
20. Ruined boat beached on north shore
21. Main Trail along northern half of western shore
22. Spit of rocks at approximate location of Mason ferry house and NPS boat landing
23. Charles R. Wait Comfort Station
24. Approximate location of six wrecked boats or scows
25. Approximate location of former stone wharf

THEODORE ROOSEVELT ISLAND

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(page 164)

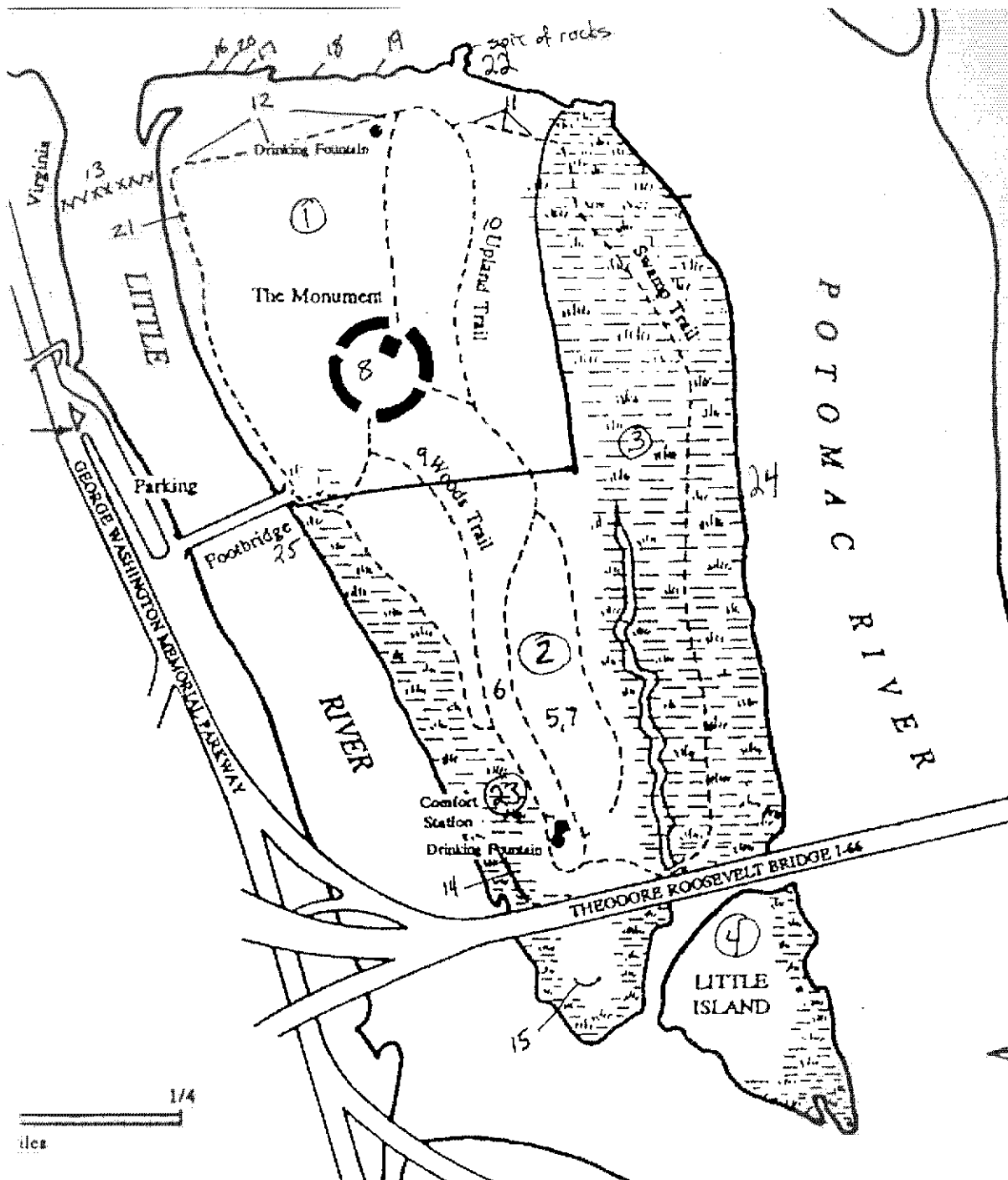


Figure 2: G[eorge] I[sham] Parkyns, *Washington* (The Apollo [New York]: I. [James] Harrison, 1 September 1795 and London: G. E. Parkyns), aquatint, Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Source: John W. Reys, *Washington on View: The Nation's Capital Since 1790* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 47.

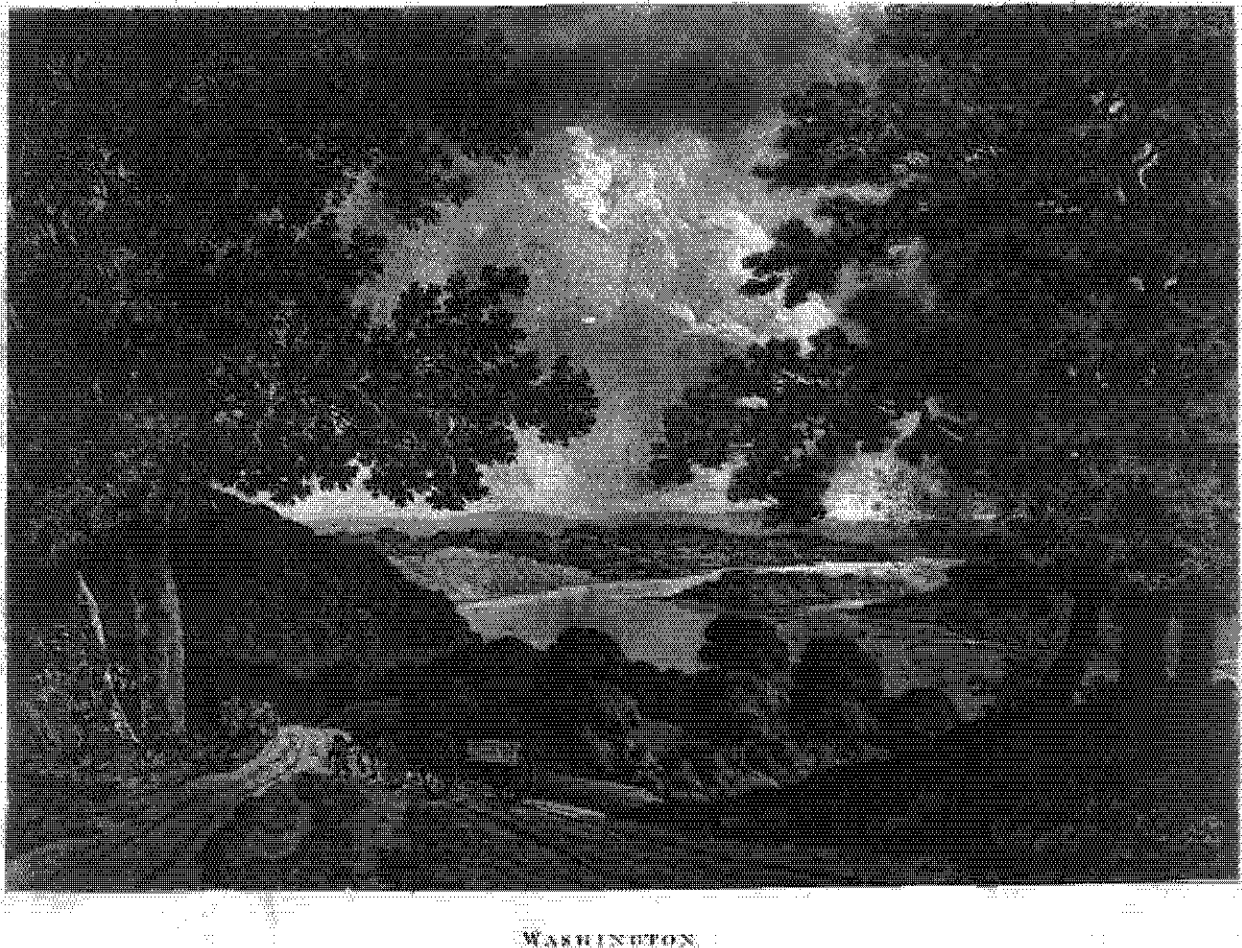


Figure 3: *George Town and Federal City, or City of Washington*, drawn by G[eorge] Beck and engraved by T. Cartwright (London and Philadelphia: Atkins & Nightingale, 1 June 1801), aquatint, Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Source: John W. Reys, *Washington on View: The Nation's Capital Since 1790* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 65.



Figure 4: Section from *Washington City*, published in S. S. Moore and T. W. Jones, *The Traveler's Dictionary . . . of the Main Road from Philadelphia to Washington* (Philadelphia: Matthew Carey, 1802), Olin Library, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

Source: John W. Reps, *Washington on View: The Nation's Capital Since 1790* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 61.



Source: “General John Mason House, Analostan Island or Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, District of Columbia” (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) No. DC-28, 1936).

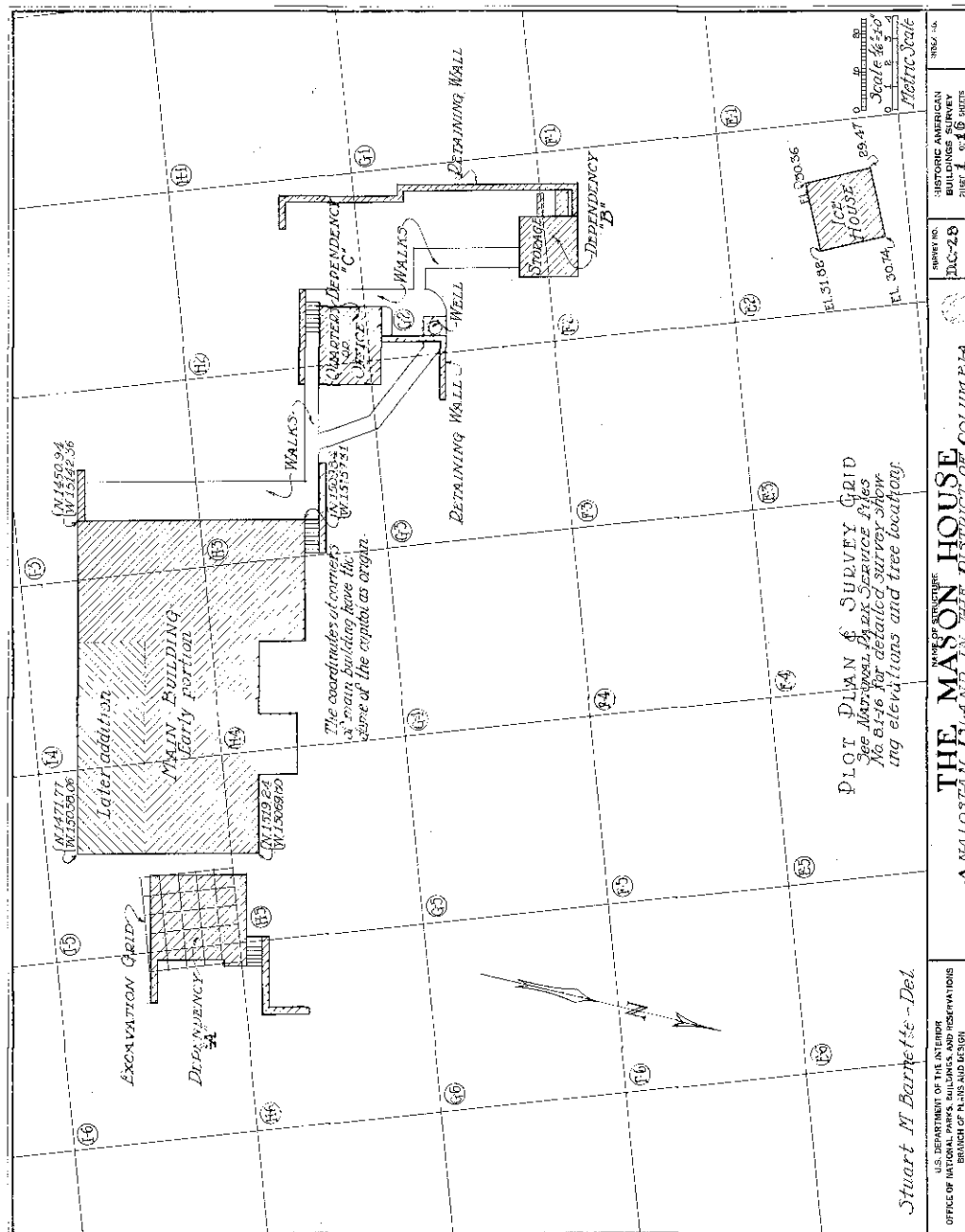


Figure 6: Stuart M. Barnette, *Plot Plan and Survey Grid, Showing Location of Camera in Taking Photographs*. View from northeast.

Source: "General John Mason House, Analostan Island or Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, District of Columbia," 6.

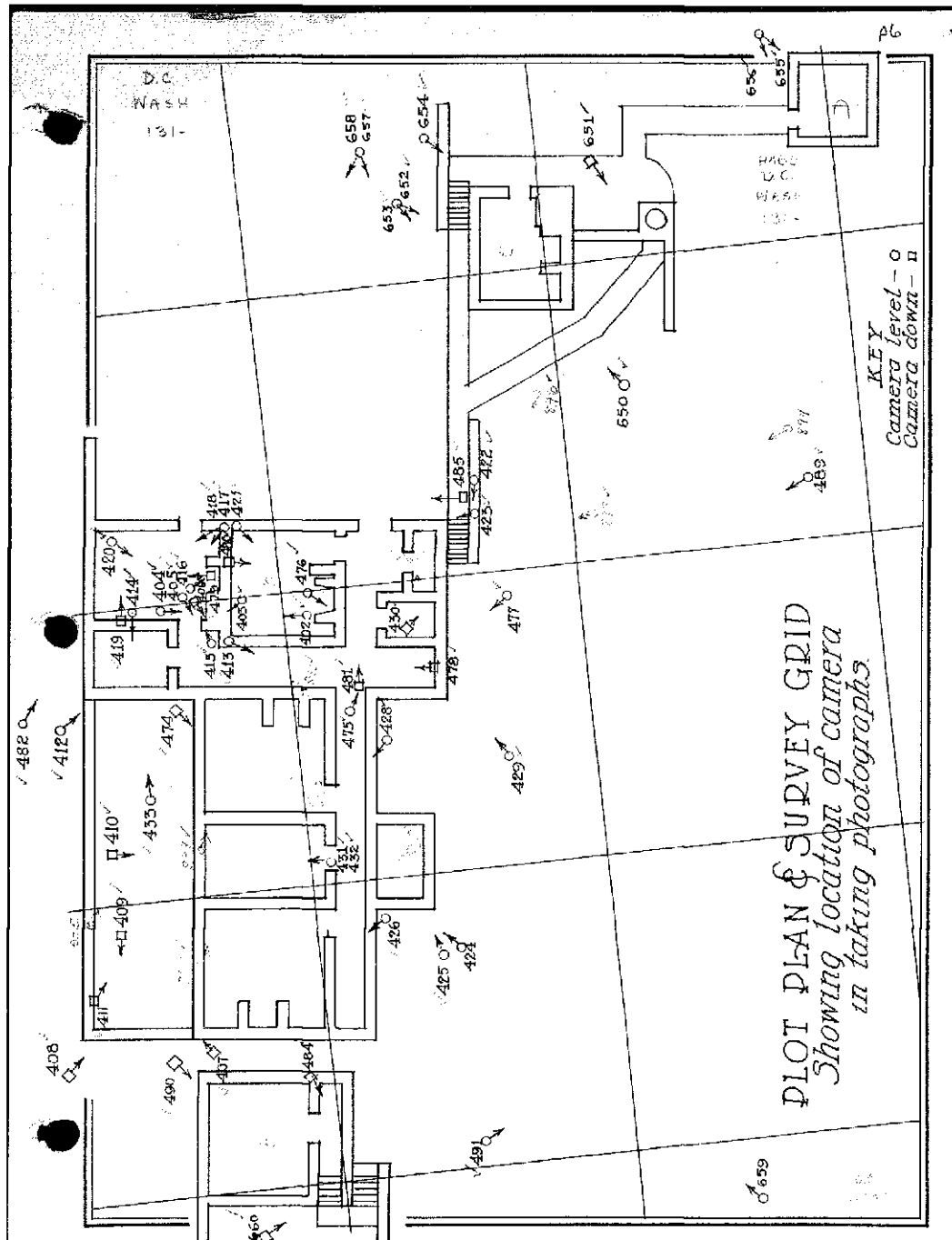


Figure 7: North façade of Mason mansion, from northwest. Photograph by John O. Brostrup, taken 27 August 1936, of sketch loaned by Mrs. Cooper Davidson.

Source: "General John Mason House, Analostan Island or Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, District of Columbia," photograph no. 9.

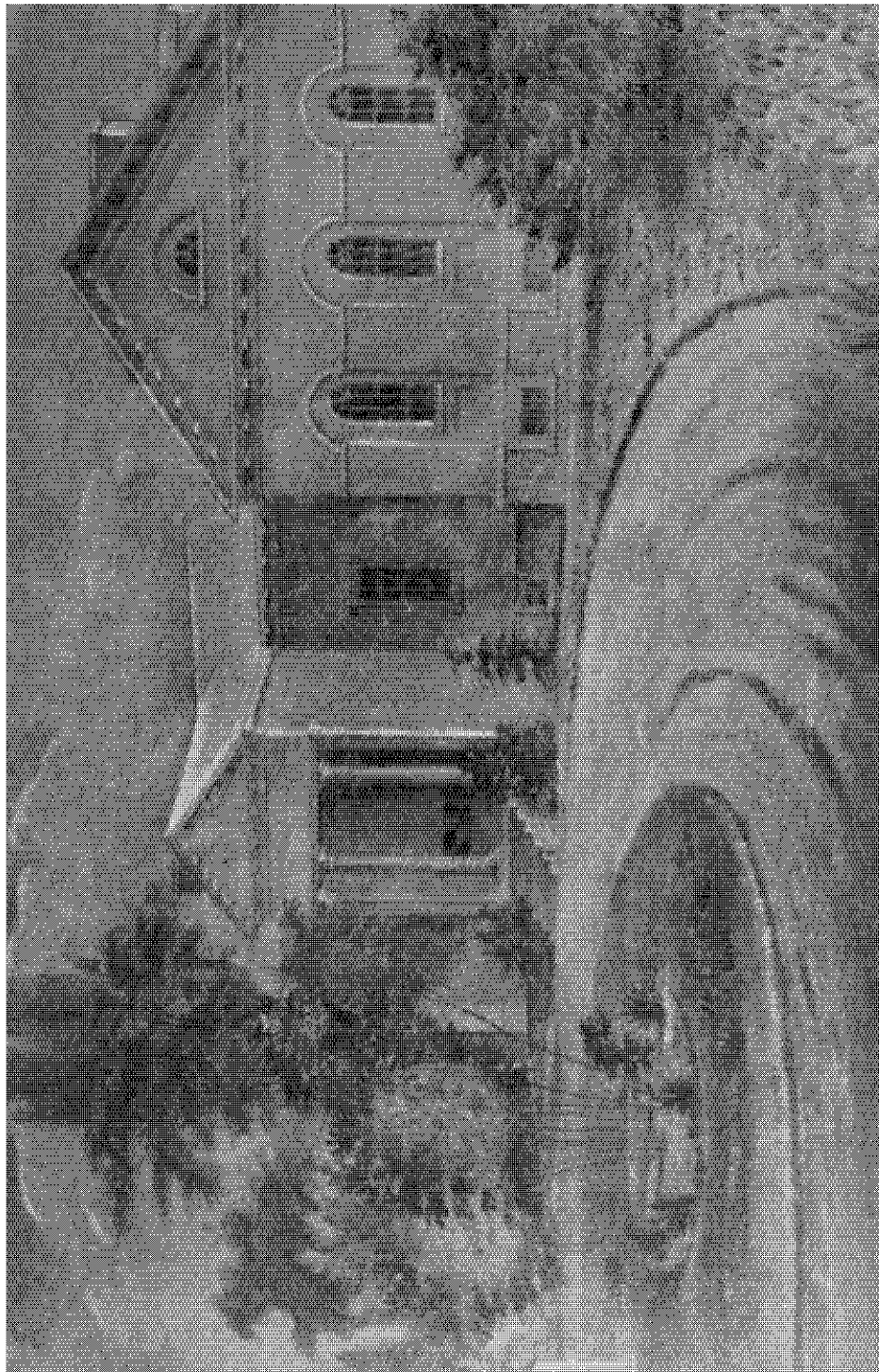


Figure 8: *Topographical Map of the District of Columbia: Surveyed in the Years 1856, '57, '58, & '59*, drawn by A[ibert] Boschke and engraved by D. McClelland, map (Washington, D.C.: D. McClelland, Blanchard & Mohun, 1861).

Source: Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, *American Memory Map Collections*, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3850.cw0678500> (accessed 21 June 2007).

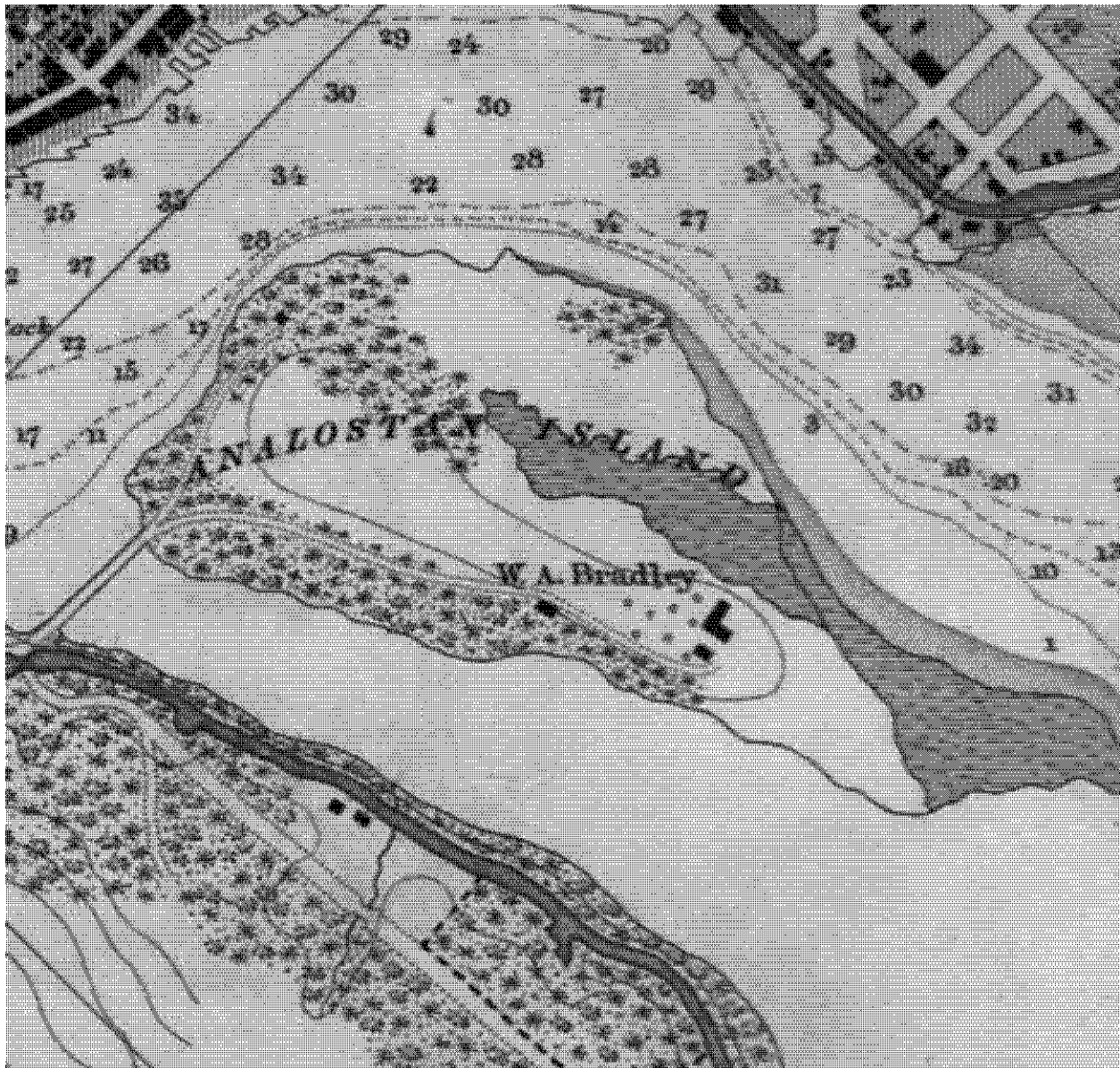


Figure 9: "Pontoon Bridge across Potomac River from Georgetown, D.C., to Analostan Island, [D.C.?], photograph, ca. June 1865.

Source: Photographer unknown, original negative in Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.; Fanning fig. 14.



Figure 10: George N. Barnard, photographer, “Washington, D.C. Georgetown Ferry-boat Carrying Wagons, and Aqueduct Bridge Beyond, from Rocks on Mason’s Island,” photograph (ca. 1862-65).

Source: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, *Selected Civil War Photographs, 1861-1865*, http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?cwar:4:./temp/~ammem_GzPD: (accessed 19 July 2007).

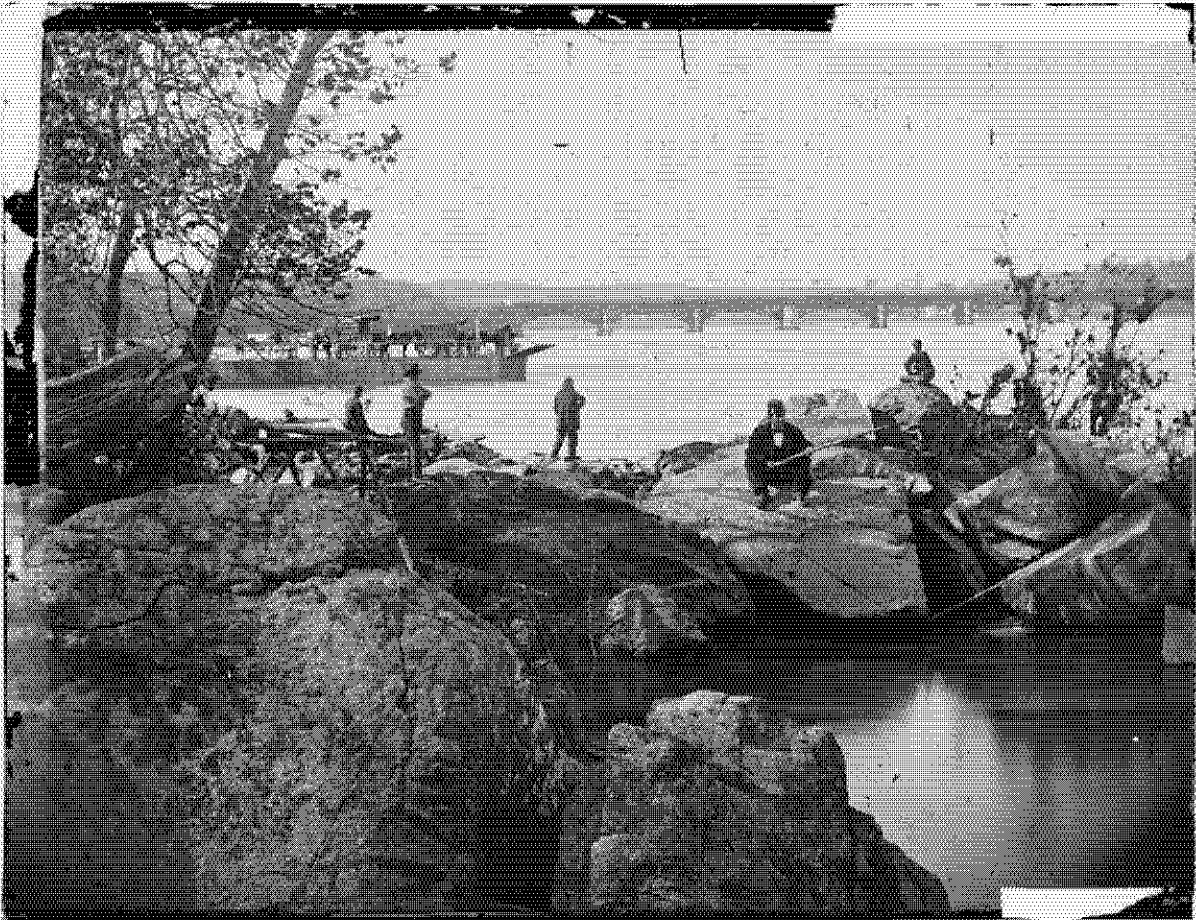


Figure 11: George N. Barnard, photographer, “Washington, D.C. Guards at Ferry Landing on Mason’s Island Examining a Pass,” photograph, ca. (1862-65).

Source: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, *Selected Civil War Photographs, 1861-1865*, http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?cwar:3:./temp/~ammem_GzPD: (accessed 19 July 2007).

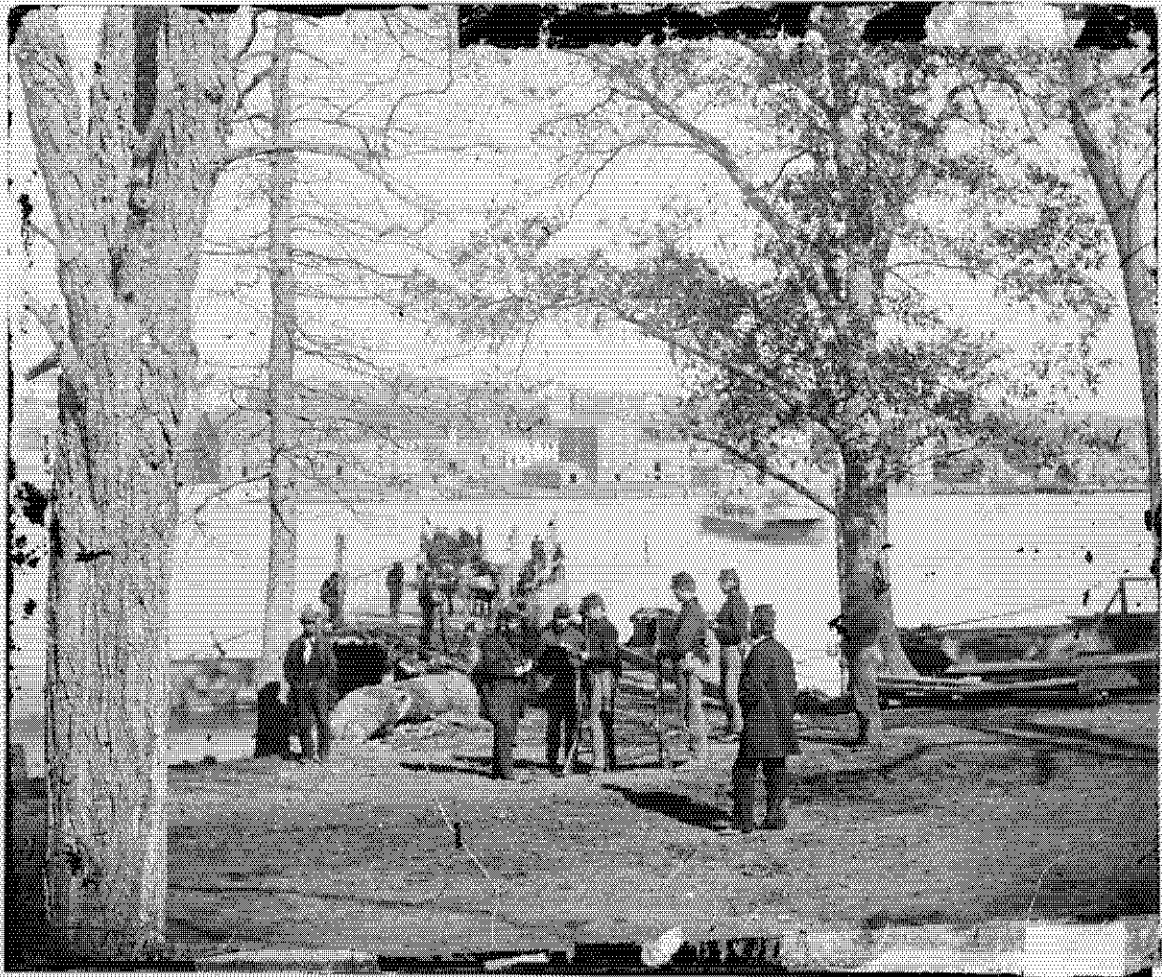
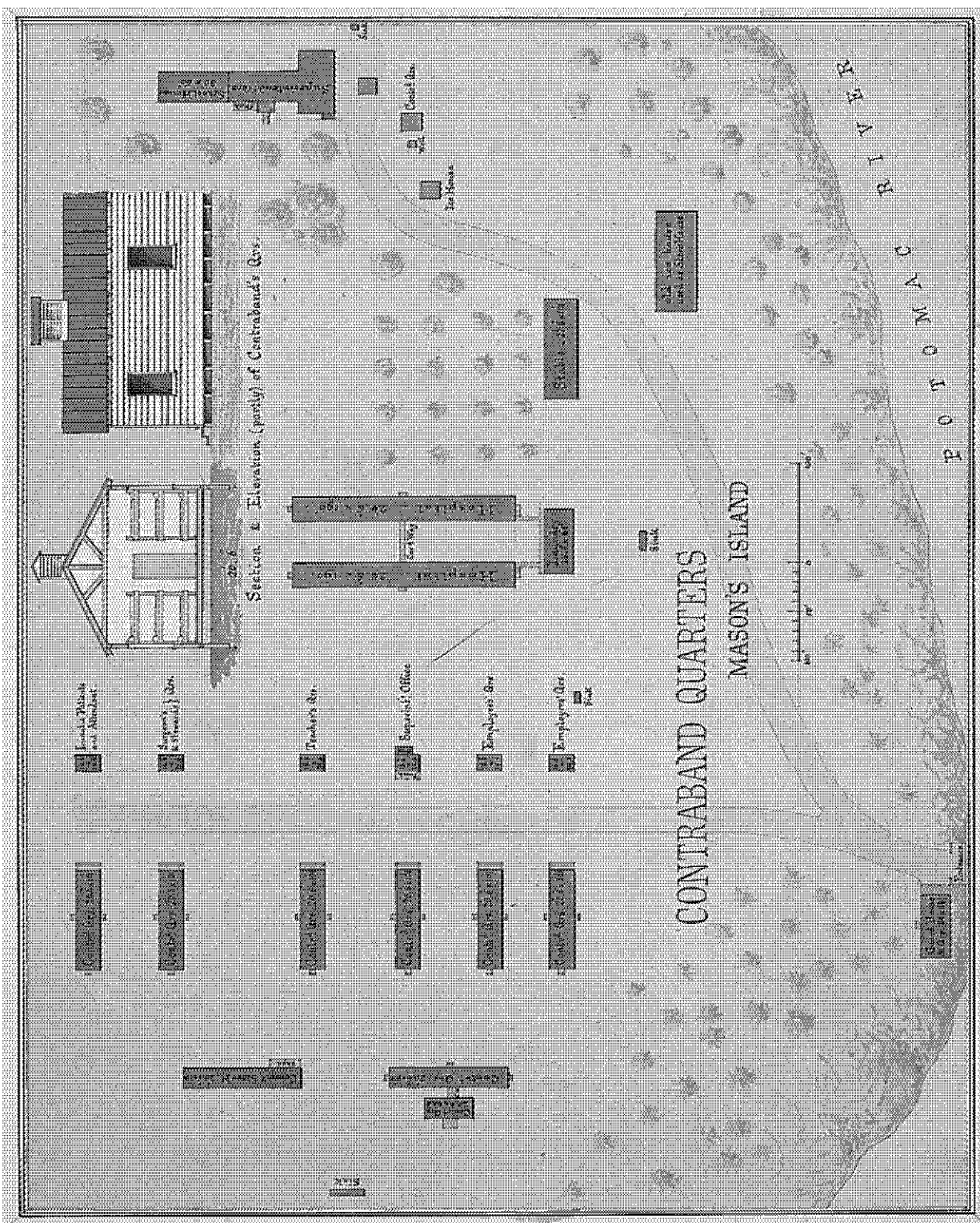


Figure 12: U.S. War Dept., Office of the Quartermaster General, *Contraband Quarters, Mason's Island, Washington, D.C.*, ground plan and building cross section, ca. July-October 1864.

Source: Record Group 92: Records of the Quartermaster General, 1774-1985, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Md.,
http://arcweb.archives.gov/arc/arch_results_detail.jsp?&pg=2&si=0&nh=4&st=b
 (accessed 11 September 2007).

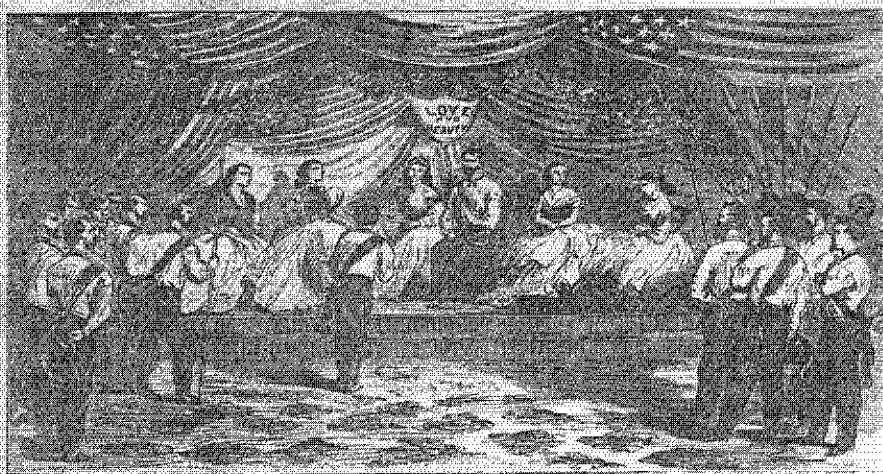


Source: “A Tournament on the Potomac,” *Harper’s Weekly*, 7 October 1865.



OCTOBER 7, 1865.

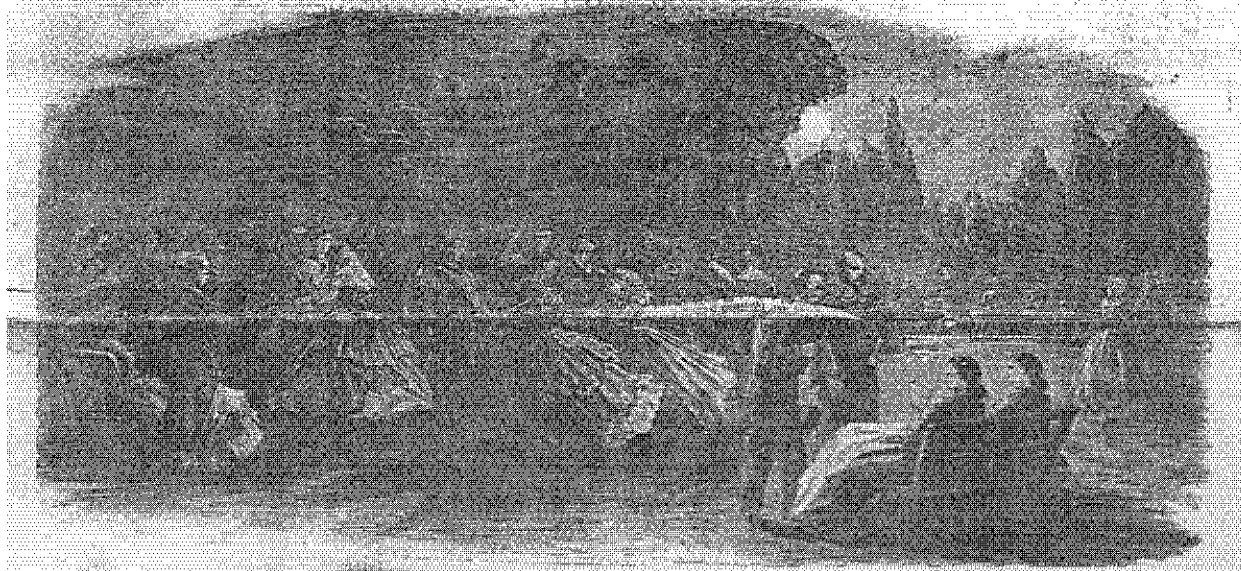
HARPER'S WEEKLY.

[illegible]

INTRODUCTION OF KNIGHTS TO THE QUEEN

[illegible]

During the war years which ended in a national ban against Masonry imposed by the Grand Lodge of Maryland, the Grand Lodge of the United States, and originated the Patriotic Order, he had extended the institution to Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia, in each of which States Grand Lodges had been formed, and out of three Grand Lodges the present Grand Lodge of the United States, in 1870.



34700 BT 305124

The steamer *John B. Jones* is from this port, and will sail for New York on Monday, and will give a better idea of the heavy season than any description.

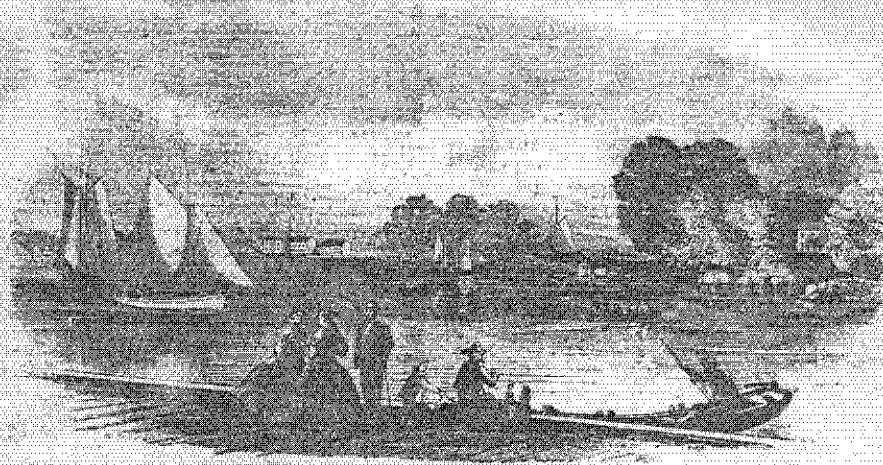
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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

732 F.3d 1013 (9th Cir. 2013),
10-1000, 2013 WL 1211065.

The story on page 1204 is a tribute to the life of Thomas W. O'Fallon, the founder of Oak Falls, who in this country, as an illustration of the immigrants, stood for his masters by the members of the Union at Madison on September 29, 1861.

Thomas W. O'Fallon was born in Ireland in 1824, died in January, 1873, during the reign of Edward III, and about the close of the Revolutionary war. At five years of age he was placed in school where a good but limited opportunity of education was afforded, and he was withdrawn at his father's death, and he became



SKALLOPEL ISLAND, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

the same period, and the same general character as the other two, and the same general character as the other two, and the same general character as the other two.

Figure 14: Max Weyl, painting of Mason ferry house, ca. 1879. Photograph by John O. Brostrup, taken 27 August 1936, of painting loaned by Mrs. Cooper Davidson.
Source: "General John Mason House, Analostan Island or Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, District of Columbia," photo 81.



Figure 15: View of Mason mansion from the northwest, ca. 1880-90. Photographic copy by HABS from original loaned by Dr. Collins Marchall.

Source: "General John Mason House, Analostan Island or Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, District of Columbia," photo 10.

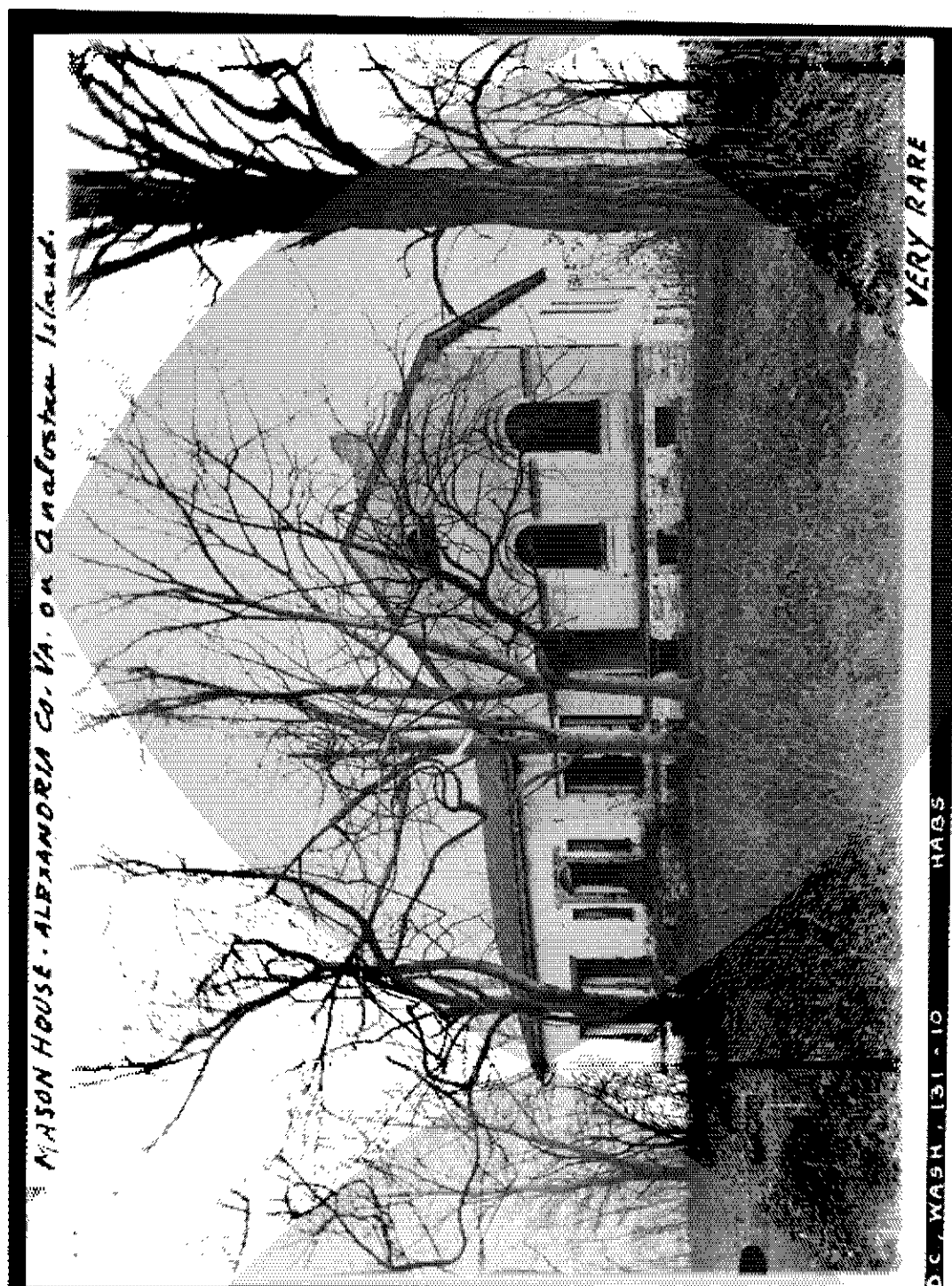


Figure 16: North elevation of Mason mansion, photograph, ca. 1905.

Source: "General John Mason House, Analostan Island or Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, District of Columbia," photo 11.



Figure 17: South elevation, west wing of Mason Mansion, photograph, ca. 1905.
Source: "General John Mason House, Analostan Island or Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, District of Columbia," photo 14.



Figure 18: CCC workers clearing bush on Theodore Roosevelt Island, photograph, ca. 1935.

Source: Photographer unknown, location of original negative unknown; Fanning, fig. 16.

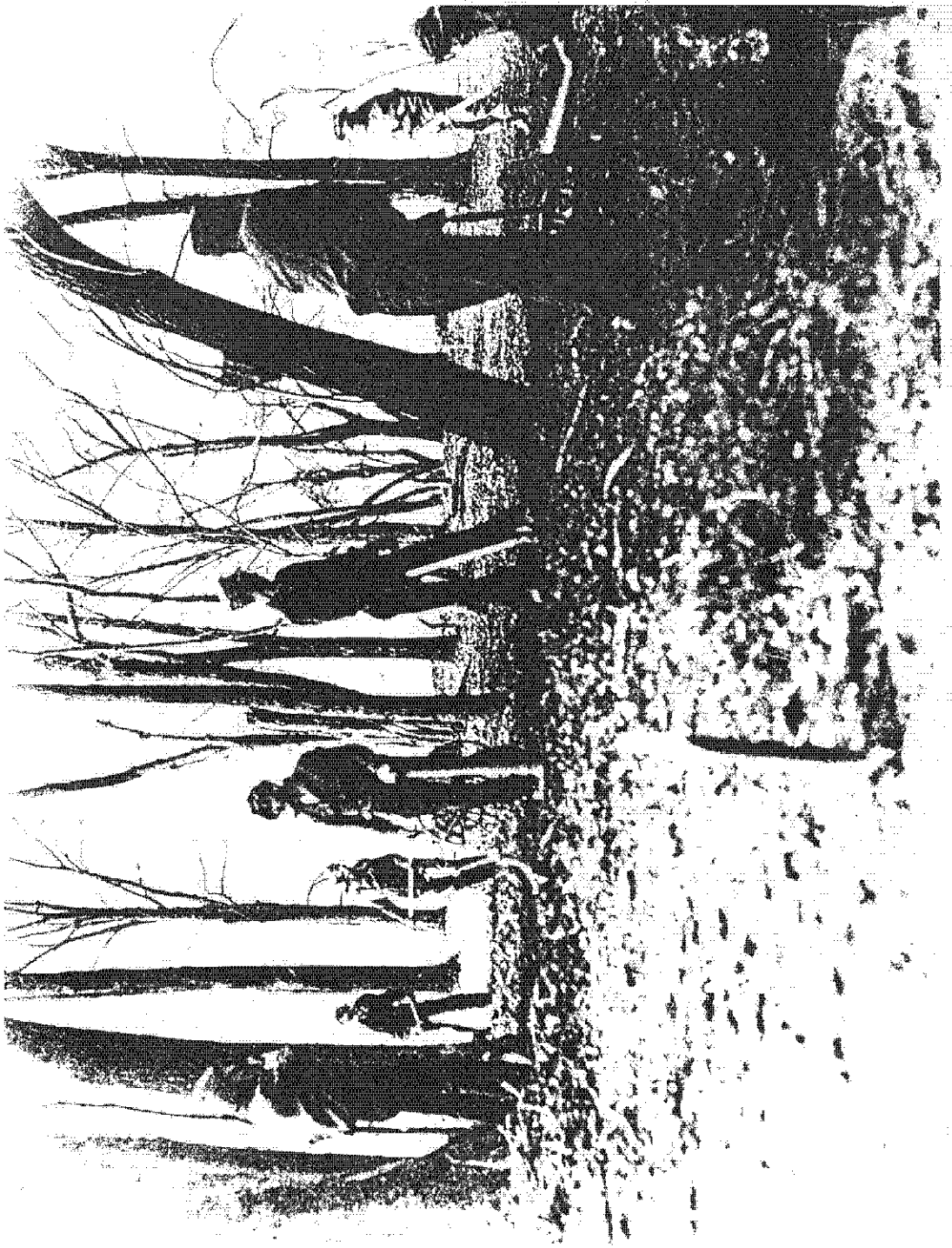
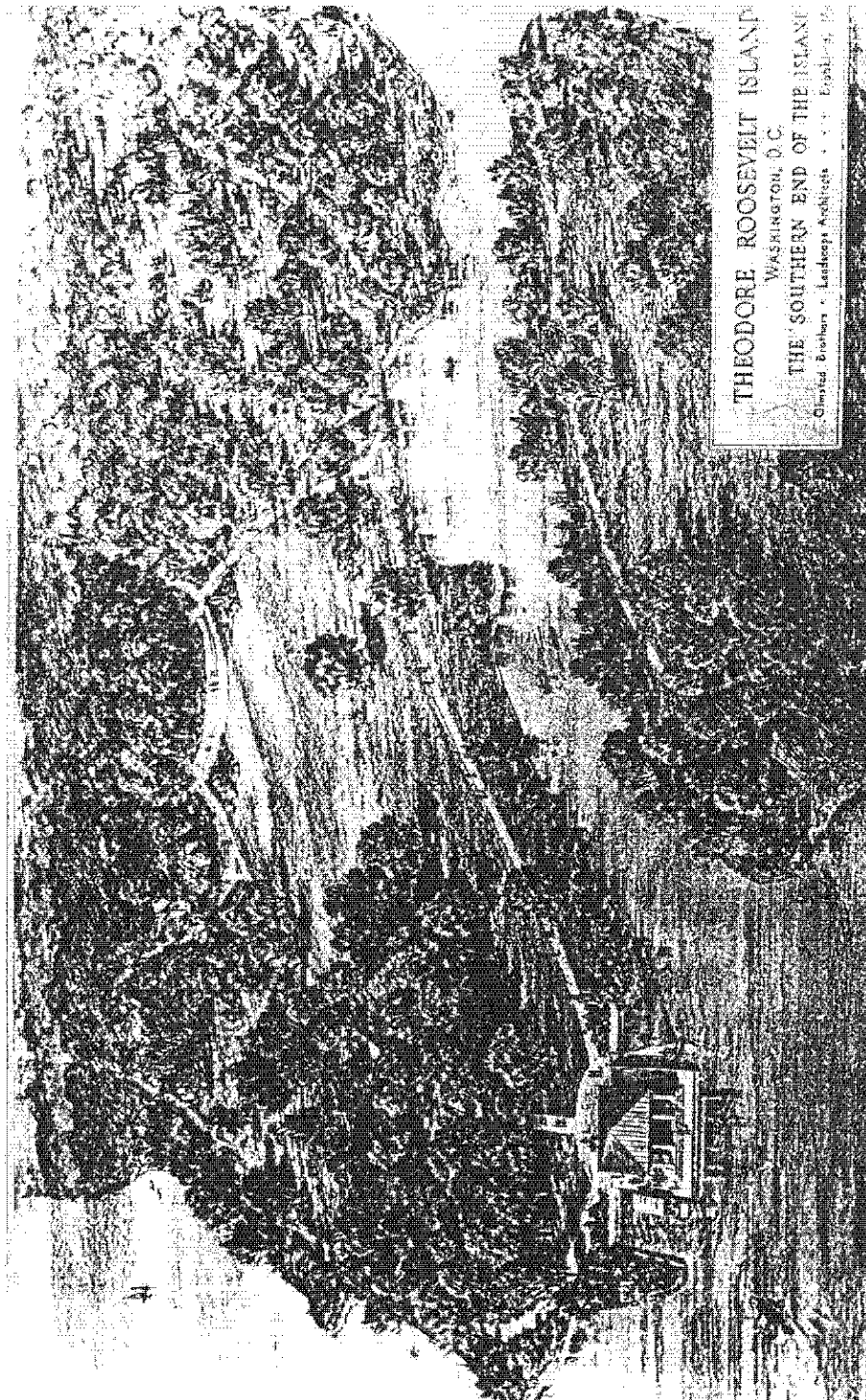


Figure 19: Raymond K. Fletcher, rendering of Olmsted Brothers' plan for island forest, ca. 1935, sketch, Roosevelt Birthplace files, New York, N.Y.
Source: Location of original unknown; Fanning, fig. 15.



Figure 20: *Theodore Roosevelt Island, Washington, D.C., the Sothern End of the Island,* rendered by Richmond K. Fletcher for Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, ca. 1937, NPS plan 1651-B.

Source: Location of original unknown; Fanning, fig. 17.



[illegible]

Figure 22: Moore, *Temporary Boat Landing, North End of Roosevelt Island* (Washington, D.C.: National Capital Parks, Engineering Division, June 1952), National Capital Parks Plan 8.1-67-1.

Source: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, Technical Information Center, *Information Gateway*.

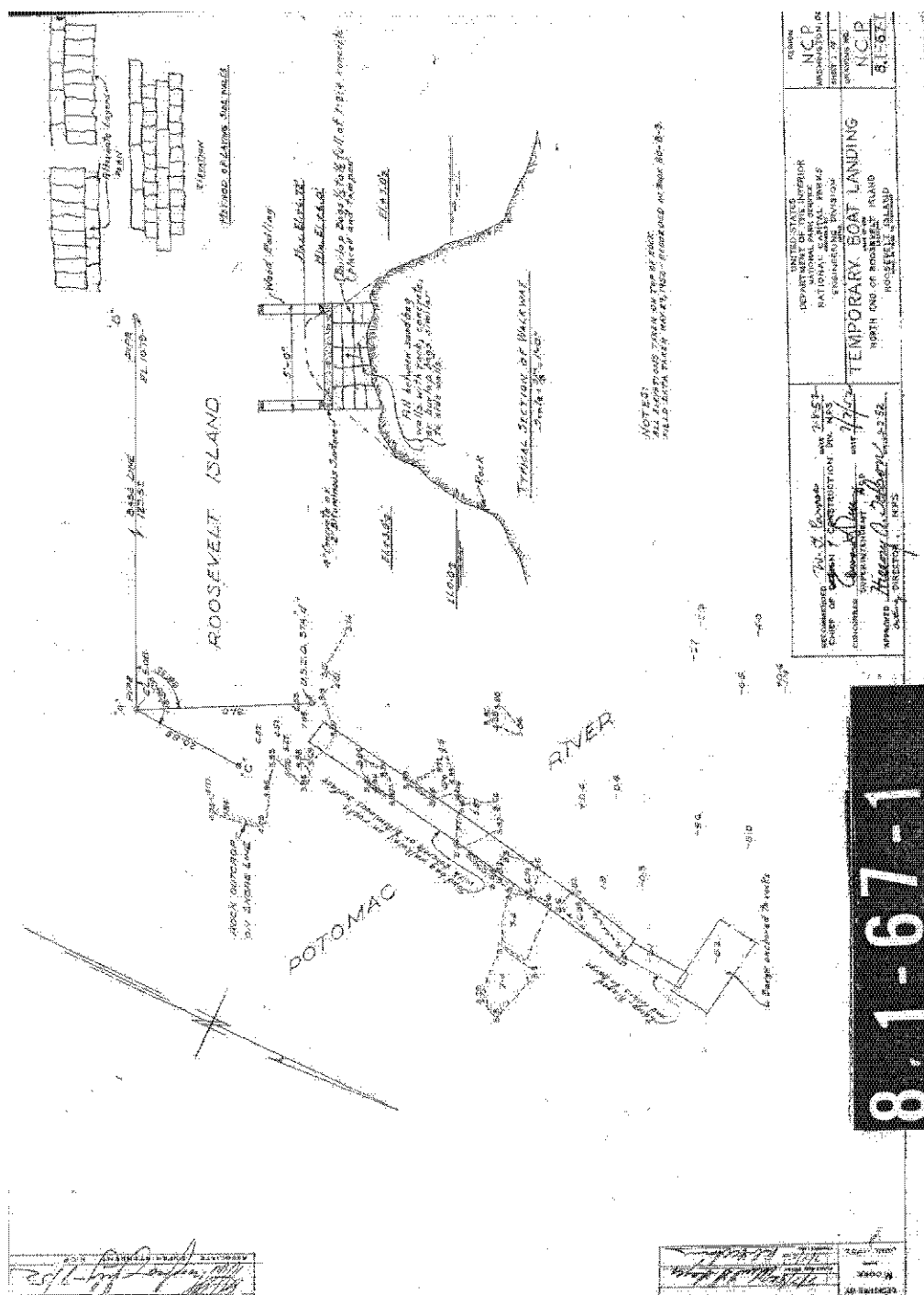


Figure 23: Proposed Theodore Roosevelt Memorial featuring armillary sphere, rendering, 1958.

Source: Artist and photographer unknown, location of original negative unknown, Fanning fig. 18.

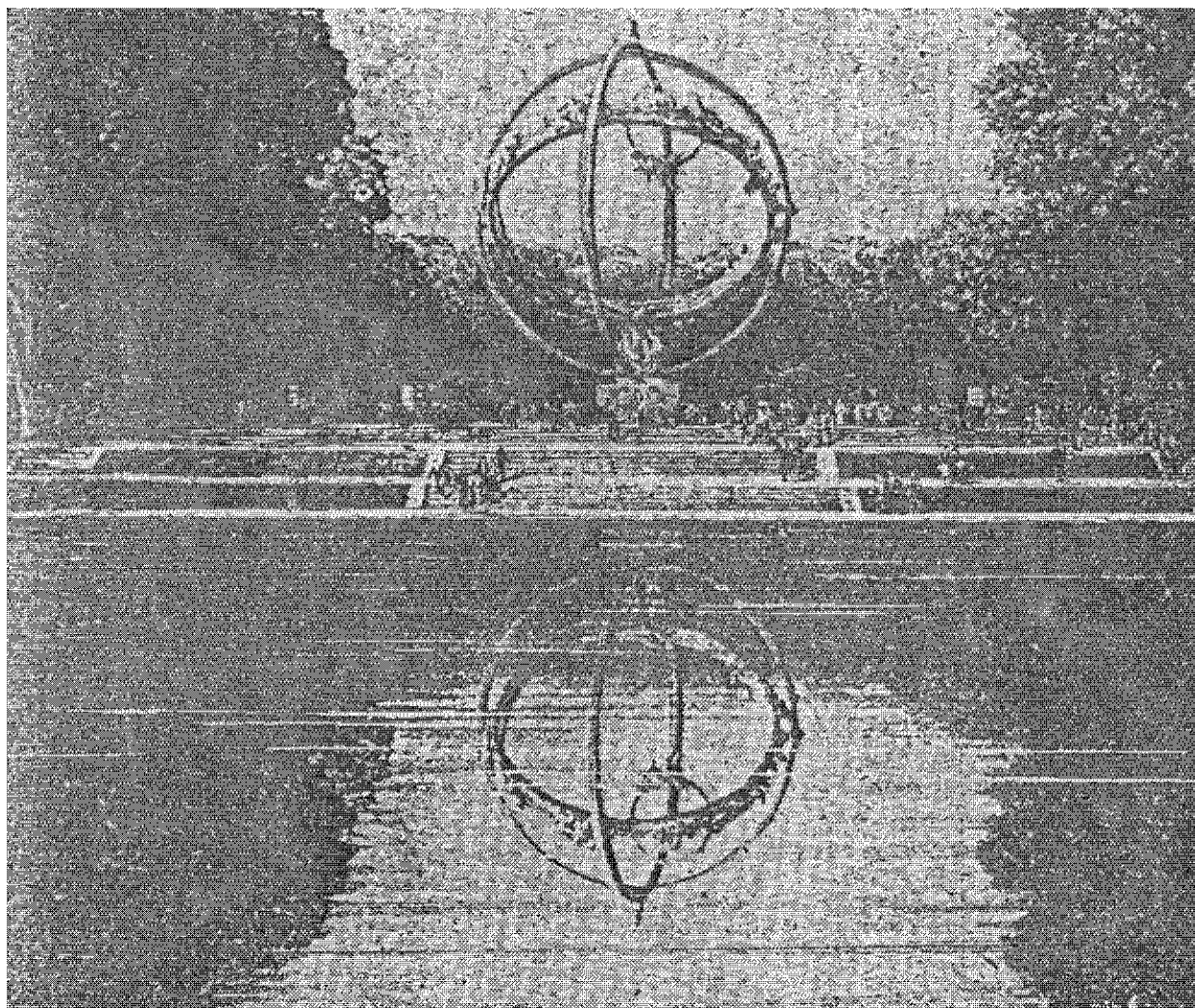


Figure 24: Trails, Vista Clearing & Planting, Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, Theodore Roosevelt Island - : U.S. Res. 560, prepared and designed by [Lee] Skillman, drawn by Turello (Washington D.C.: National Park Service Design and Construction, National Capital Office, 15 February 1965), drawing no. N.C.R. plan 8.1-151A-3.

Source: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, Technical Information Center, Information Gateway.

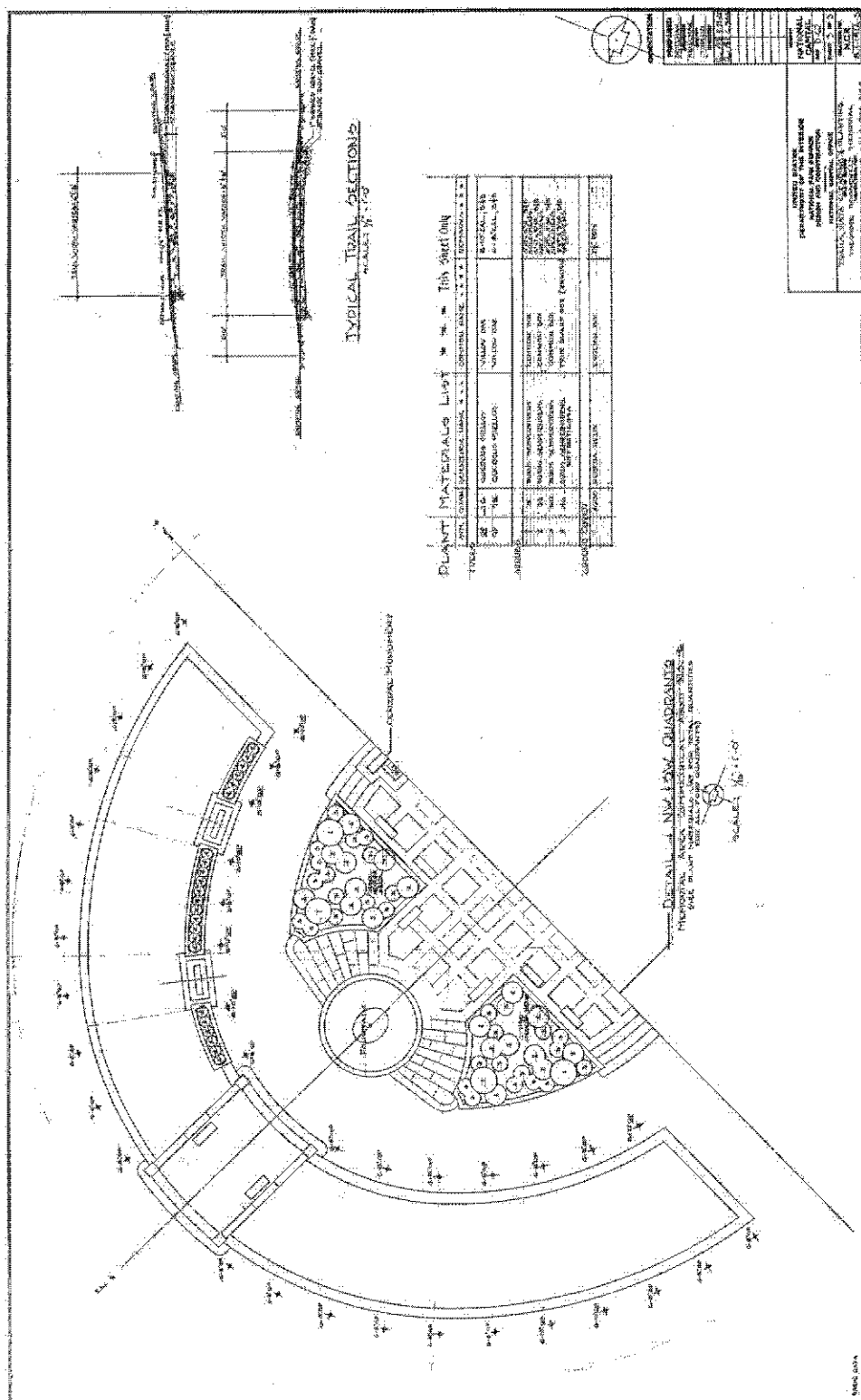


Figure 25: *Trails, Vista Clearing & Planting, Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, Theodore Roosevelt Island - : U.S. Res. 560*, prepared and designed by [Lee] Skillman, drawn by Turello (Washington D.C.: National Park Service Design and Construction, National Capital Office, 15 February 1965), drawing no. N.C.R. 8.1-151A-1.

Source: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, Technical Information Center, *Information Gateway*.

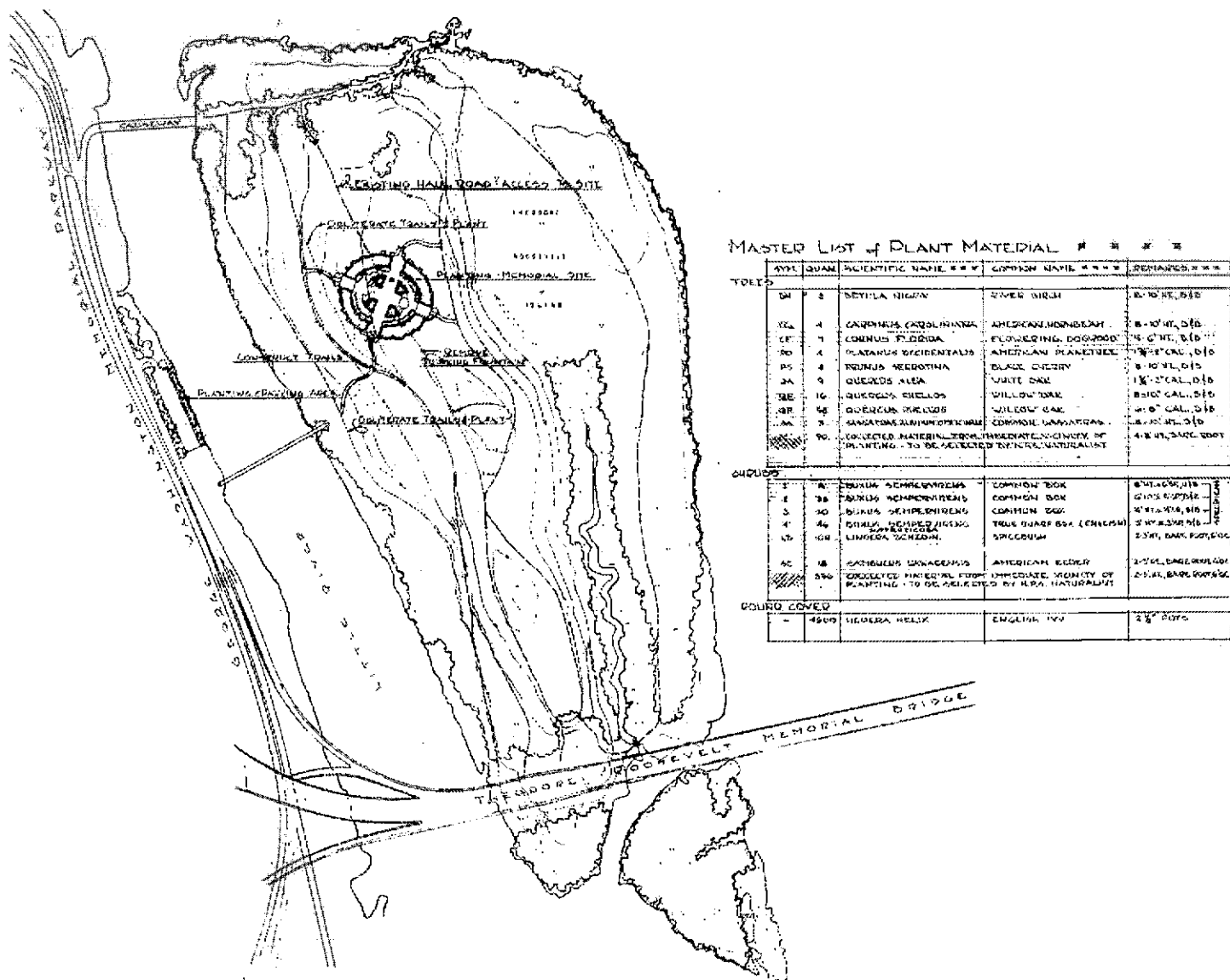


Figure 26: *Trails, Vista Clearing & Planting, Theodore Roosevelt Memorial, Theodore Roosevelt Island - : U.S. Res. 560*, prepared and designed by [Lee] Skillman, drawn by Turello (Washington D.C.: National Park Service Design and Construction, National Capital Office, 15 February 1965), drawing no. N.C.R. 8.1-151A-2.

Source: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, Technical Information Center, *Information Gateway*.

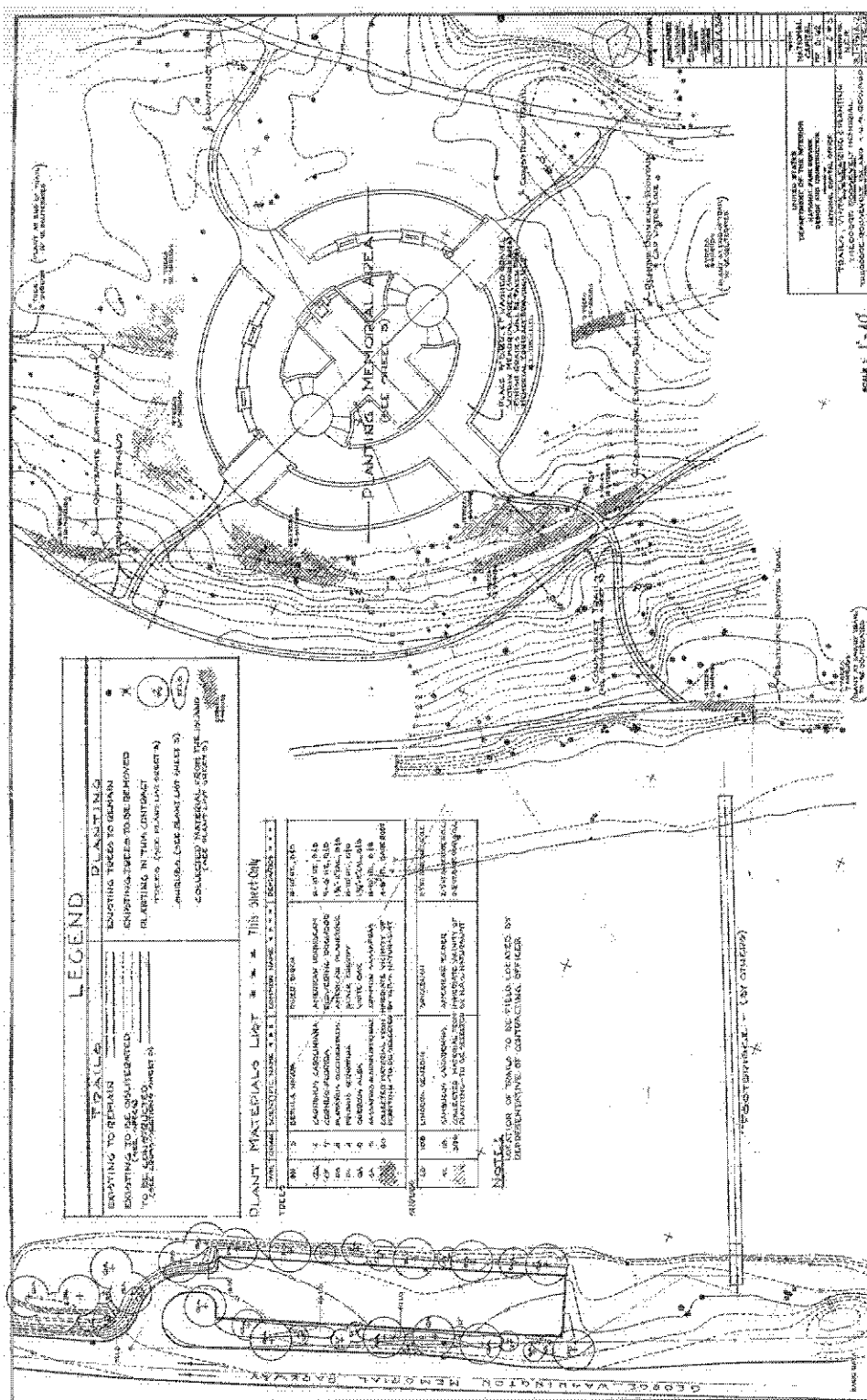


Figure 27: NPS map showing trails and locations of structures, May 1960 [existing conditions ca. 1953].

Source: Location of original unknown; Fanning, fig. 7.

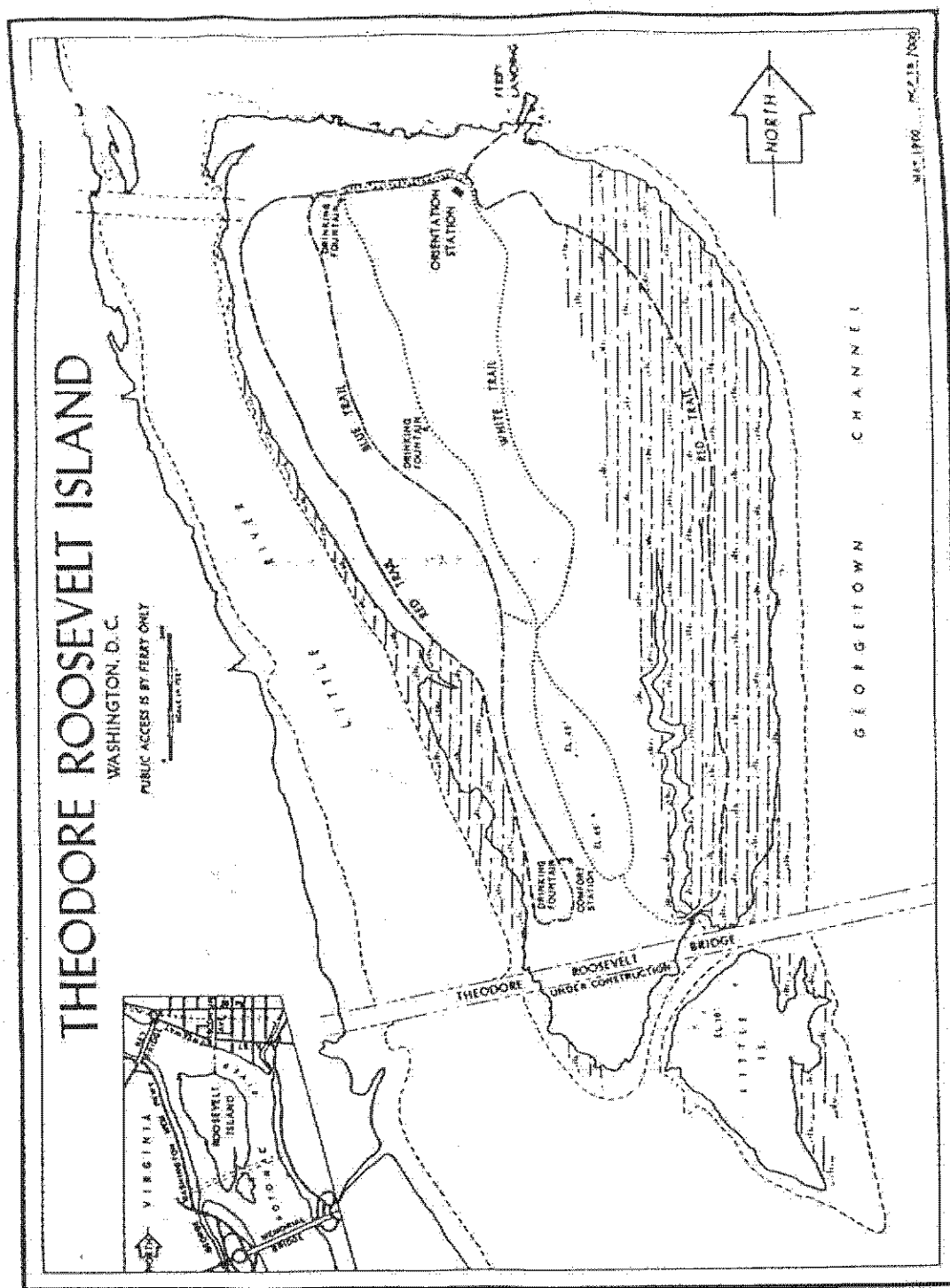


Figure 28: Location of excavation TRI #1, within archeological site 51NW3.

Source: Harvard G. Ayers, "Report of Archeological Testing of the Site of TRI #1 on Theodore Roosevelt Island, with an Addendum, A History of Theodore Roosevelt Island by Edith Moore Sprouse" (unpublished report, Catholic University of America, 1967), fig. 1.

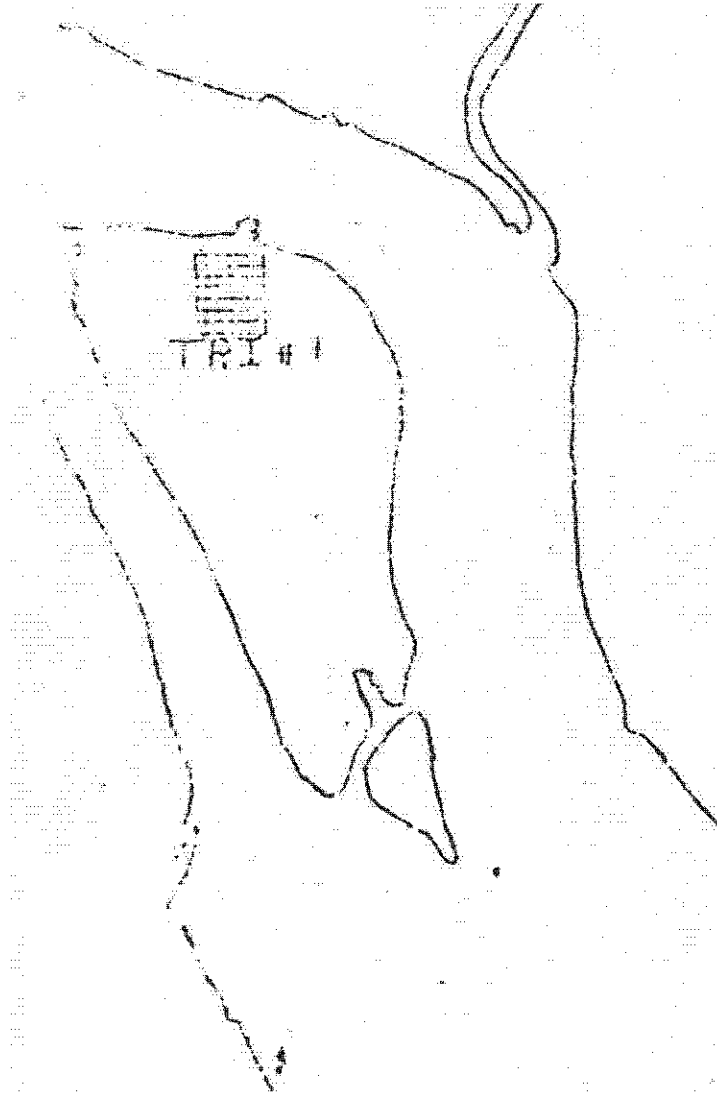


Figure 29: Topographic Map of TRI #1 and location of excavation units.

Source: Harvard G. Ayers, "Report of Archeological Testing of the Site of TRI #1 on Theodore Roosevelt Island, with an Addendum, A History of Theodore Roosevelt Island by Edith Moore Sprouse" (unpublished report, Catholic University of America, 1967), fig. 2.

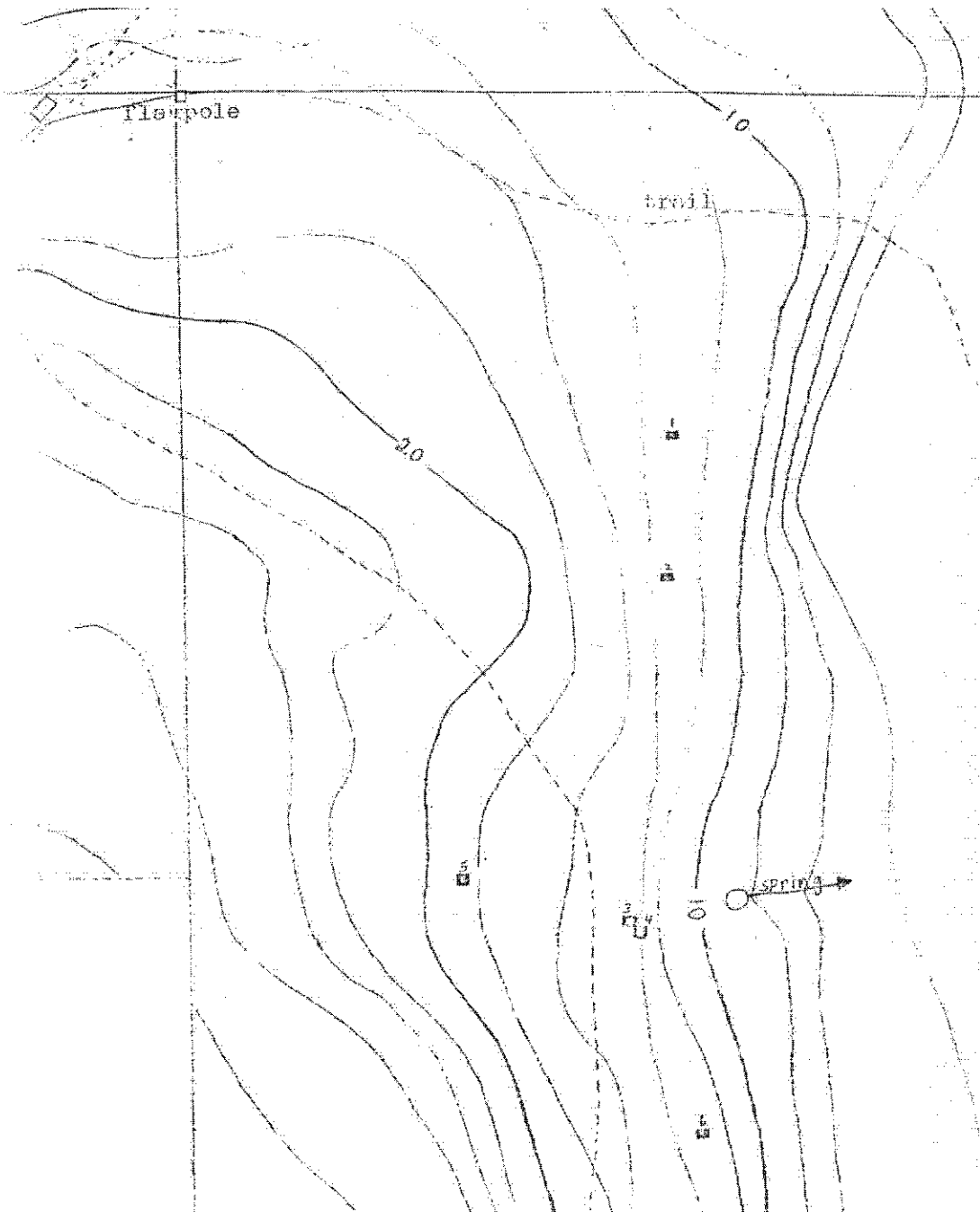
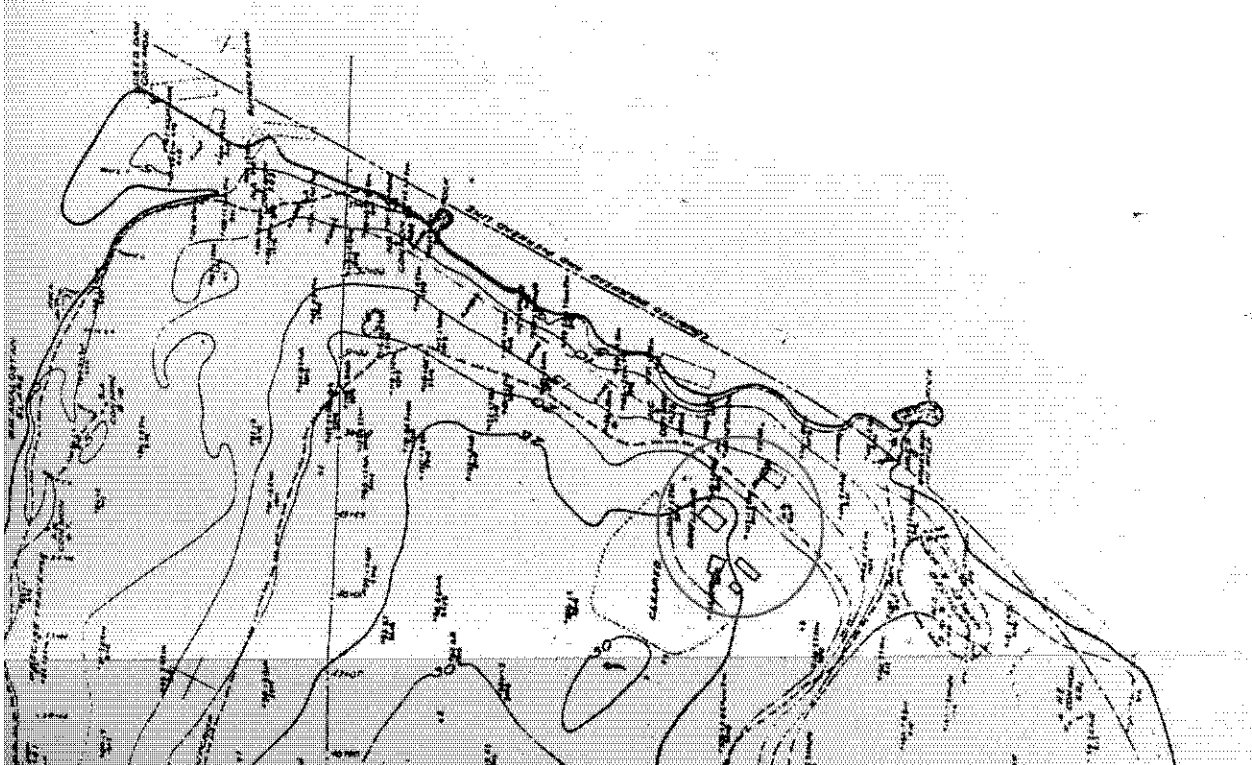


Figure 30: North end of Theodore Roosevelt Island, locations of proposed ferry house site, "dwelling," and three small buildings are circled. Taken from Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital, *Roosevelt Island, Work Project for Period Ending 3/31/36* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Public Buildings and Public Grounds, 1932), National Capital Parks Plan 8.1-2.

Source: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, Technical Information Center, *Information Gateway*, Fanning, fig. 5.



C. Appendix 1

[Transcription]
THEODORE ROOSEVELT ISLAND

List of areas in which planting is proposed
During the period October 1935 to March 1936
Inclusive. (For locations see plan of June, 1935) [see below]

By F. L. Olmsted
Landscape Architect

Brookline, Mass.
June 15, 1935

1. Contains some-fine tall forest trees, but with many gaps; to be filled in as a close forest stand.
2. Similar, but requiring dense undergrowth and some evergreen trees.
- 3, 4 and 5. Isolated gaps in existing forest of large trees; to be planted in conformity with surroundings.
6. Open stand of large spreading trees, mostly elms; general character to be maintained, a very few additional spreading trees required, mainly oaks.
7. Existing good trees sparse, to be interplanted as an extension of the close forest to the south.
8. Now mostly open, to be made into continuous forest, by filling in spaces between existing small groups of good trees.
9. Open stand of spreading trees, mainly elms, including some very fine individuals; views from the upper levels of slope toward Little River and in the reverse direction to be kept open between trunks and under foliage canopy. Only a few additional trees required, mainly in the eastern lobe; but these should be of respectable size.
10. Practically bare ground except for one small clump of locust; to be planted to continuous forest.
11. Eastern woodland slope with good-sized trees fringing the base and scattering loosely up the slope; numerous gaps to be planted so as to make close-stand forest.
12. Occupied in part by a fairly close pure stand of respectable sized silver maples, in part by one of somewhat smaller elms, and in part nearly open; needs filling of gaps and under-planting with other species so as to produce ultimately a normal forest stand.

13. A few trees needed along foot-trail.
14. Existing volunteer woodland having a very insufficient proportion of other species than locust or elm, generally too sparse and with some extensive bare spaces; whole to be interplanted so as to form continuous forest with undergrowth sufficient to reenforce [sic] the topographic division between the west slope and the plateau.
15. To be planted in continuous forest among existing scattered locusts, with undergrowth partially screening probable picnic area to the east.
16. Bare ground in old clearing; to be planted in nearly continuous forest, designed to be adaptable, in the northerly end at least, to use for picnics, etc. (See 20).
17. Similar to 15; but with fewer existing trees of any value and requiring undergrowth mainly near western edge.
18. Very open stand of spreading trees, mostly elms, bordered by good fringe of shore trees on west; general character to be maintained and developed, additional tree planting almost exclusively near path at west edge of area for shade and to provide a strong border in future if and when existing large trees along the shore are removed for increasing capacity of flood-relief channel.
19. Very good volunteer stand of fair-sized ash trees, needing very little supplementary planting.
20. Recently open land from which thickets of Ailanthus and other small weed-trees are being removed, leaving scattered trees, mostly elms, of good promise, to be interplanted with other native forest trees suitably for use as a picnic area in connection with proposed toilet facilities and shelter at E. Undergrowth near eastern and western margins to segregate picnic grove from the surrounding forest.
21. Group of rather large elms; to be supplemented only by two or three additional trees.
22. Now occupied by mostly small volunteer elms; to be planted in continuous mixed forest, with a heavy thinning out of the elms, and with undergrowth planting along the northerly edge to separate this unit from the river slope and views toward Georgetown commercial water-front.
23. Largely open, but with scattered trees; to be planted similarly to 22.
24. North river margin, now generally agreeable as to vegetation; needing a few additional trees in gaps and the development of better undergrowth-framing numerous small pictorial glimpses of the river and Key Bridge and the opposite shore from the path without opening up broad views of the Georgetown industrial district.

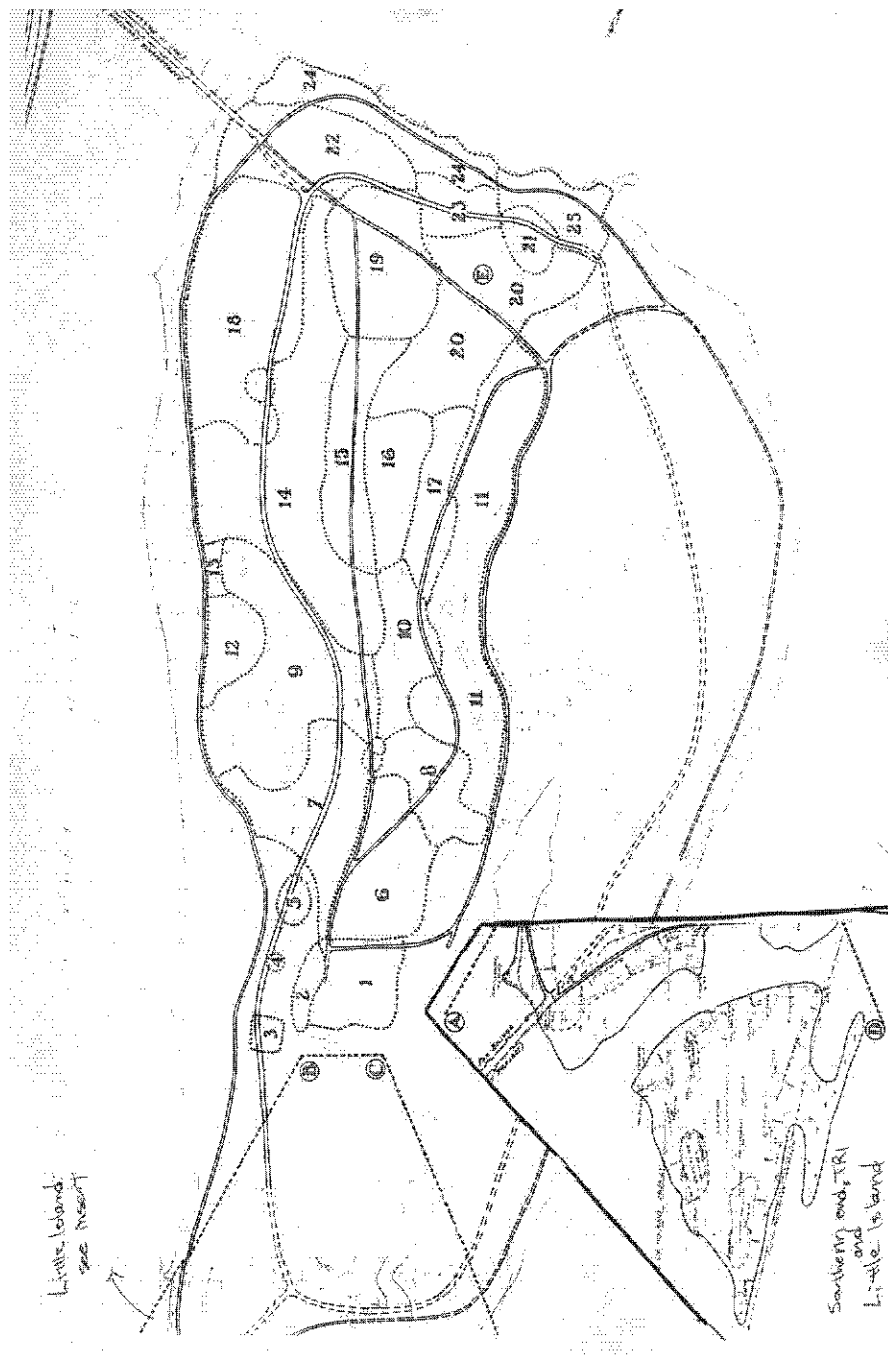
25. An area now largely open; to be so planted as to continue the general effect of 24.

The aggregate extent of the 25 areas listed is approximately 36 acres.

Detailed planting plans for the above areas are in course of preparation.

Source: Olmsted Papers and Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, *Roosevelt Island, Work Project for Period Ending 3/31/36* (Brookline, Mass.: Olmsted Brothers, June 1935), Olmsted Brothers Plan 2843-AI-607, National Capital Parks Plan 8.1-2A.



Source: National Park Service, Technical Information Center, *Information Gateway* (Denver: Electronic Technical Information Center (ETIC)), <http://etic.nps.gov/welcome.aspx>, folder 854: Theodore Roosevelt Island Park, Analostan Island (accessed 11 June 2007); Fanning fig. 9.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The documentation of Theodore Roosevelt Island was undertaken by the Historic American Landscapes Survey of the Heritage Documentation Programs of the National Park Service. The principals involved were Richard O'Connor, Chief, Heritage Documentation Programs; Paul D. Dolinsky, Chief, Historic American Landscapes Survey; David Vela, Superintendent, George Washington Memorial Parkway; Bonita Muller, Project Manager, Denver Service Center; Andrew Wenchel, Historical Architect, George Washington Memorial Parkway. The documentation was produced during the summer and fall of 2007 by Field Project Supervisor, Anne E. Kidd, Architect; Meghan Clemmens, Architect, Clemson State University; Cal Mincey, Landscape Architect, University of Georgia, Athens; Jonathan Pliska, Landscape Architectural Historian; James Rosenthal and Jet Lowe, Landscape Architectural Photographers and James Stein, Geographic Information Systems Specialist.